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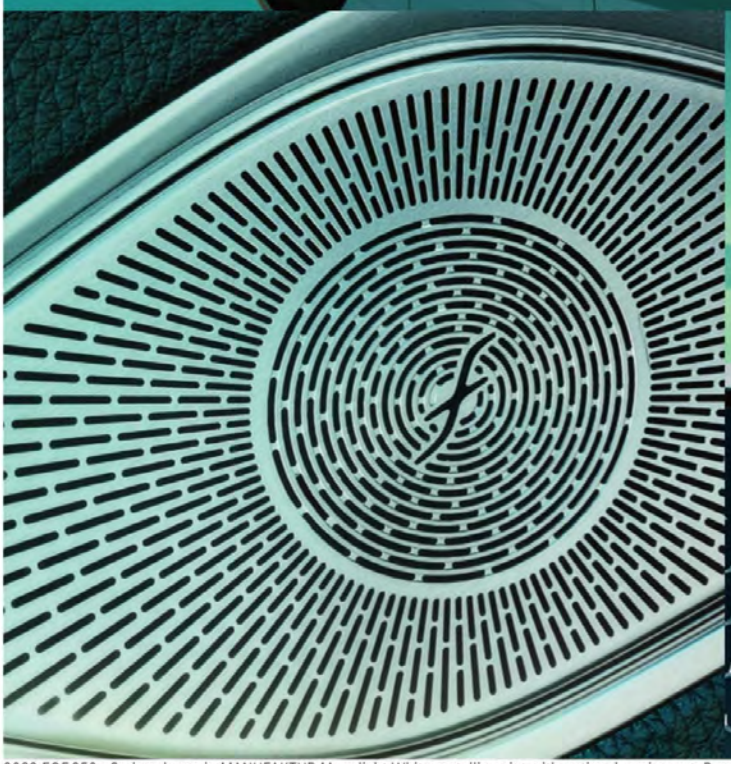

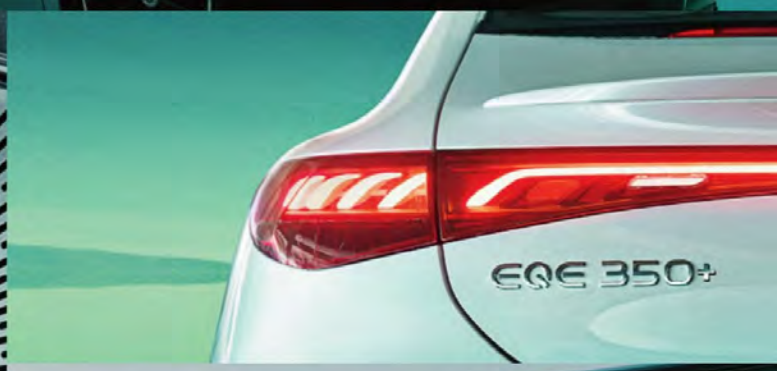

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Fans may also visit one of the Super Bowl Guest Services offices at any point during Super Bowl LVII at State Farm Stadium. Guest Services staff will be on standby to assist.

Super Bowl Code of Conduct

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THE EAGLES AND THE CHIEFS ARE SET TO LIGHT UP THE SKY AT SUPER BOWL LVII IN ARIZONA.

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ENERGIZED EAGLES LAND IN SUPER BOWL

BY CRAIG ELLENPORT

THE PHILADELPHIA EAGLES WON Super Bowl LII as heavy underdogs with a backup quarterback after their MVP candidate at the position was injured late in the season. Five years later, the Eagles have returned to the Super Bowl with a different quarterback, but are looking for the same results.

Third-year QB Jalen Hurts has gained a legion of admirers during a breakout 2022 season that cast him into the MVP discussion. And similar to Carson Wentz in 2017, he was sidelined by a late-season injury. But unlike his predecessor, Hurts was able to return. He helped Philadelphia win in Week 18 to secure the NFC's No. 1 seed, and now has led the "E-A-G-L-E-S" onto the NFL's biggest stage.

Second-year head coach Nick Sirianni saw his squad race to an 8-0 start – Philly was the last team to lose a game in 2022 – and finish with a 14-3 record. General manager Howie Roseman is known for building teams that are strong from the trenches out, and this year's unit reflects that philosophy. Yet as he added pieces for 2022, Roseman had the luxury of knowing the Eagles were deep in those areas, allowing him to expand his focus.

He imported a key addition on draft day by trading for Pro Bowl wide receiver A.J. Brown. Roseman also made two big early moves for the defense by signing linebacker Haason Reddick and cornerback James Bradberry in free agency. In August, he acquired safety C.J. Gardner-Johnson from the Saints. All four players have made significant impacts.

Eight players from the Eagles' 2017 Super Bowl squad remain on the team's roster: offensive linemen Jason Kelce, Lane Johnson, and Isaac Seumalo; defensive linemen Brandon Graham, Fletcher Cox, and Derek Barnett (injured reserve); kicker Jake Elliott; and long snapper Rick Lovato. Their leadership, along with the

Jalen Hurts has made huge strides in his second season as a starter, throwing for 22 TDs and running for another 13 during the regular season.

John Minchillo/AP Images

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A draft-day acquisition, A.J. Brown has thrived in his first season with the Eagles. The wide receiver averaged 17.0 yards on his 88 regular-season receptions, 11 of those going for touchdowns. Defensive tackle Fletcher Cox is one of eight current Eagles who was on the Super Bowl LII championship team. This season, he had seven sacks among his 43 tackles.

playoff experience from a year ago, has helped create a team with the ability to dominate on both sides of the ball.

The 2022 NFL season saw a record number of close contests, but Philadelphia won six games by more than 10 points. The offense scored 477 points, second-most in the league, and tallied 34-or-more six times. And the defense held nine foes to 17-or-fewer points, allowing the Eagles to notch a scoring differential of plus-133, third in the NFL.

Even with the improvements that Roseman made to the roster, which included mid-season acquisitions to shore up the defensive line, the biggest strides have come from Hurts. The 2020 second-round draft pick, who backed up Wentz as a rookie, has worked relentlessly on his craft to become one of the league's elite dual-threat quarterbacks.

OFFENSE

The Eagles' offense is a reflection of its quarterback – dynamic both running and passing the football. Philadelphia ranked fifth in the league in rushing yards per game (147.6) and eighth in passing yards per game (256.7). That versatility, along with a plethora of weapons, is what makes the Eagles so dangerous.

"We try to get everyone involved," says offensive coordinator Shane Steichen. "I think it's the way the game is going. If someone has the hot hand, you roll with it and you go."

It starts with Hurts, who's had the sizzling hands – and feet – for most of the season. He threw for 3,701 yards and 22 touchdowns while rushing for 760 yards and another 13 scores. At a time when the league features explosive running quarterbacks such as Lamar Jackson, Justin Fields, and Josh Allen, Hurts might be the best. He's the first quarterback in NFL history with 10-or-more rushing touchdowns in back-to-back seasons, and his eight career games with at least two rushing touchdowns already is second all time behind Cam Newton's 10.

While his rushing and passing skills are elite, Hurts actually prefers to be thought of as a "triple threat" quarterback. The third skill? His smarts.

"The decisions he has made throughout the season have been terrific," says Steichen. "He's playing at a high level."

Hurts' good decisions helped him cut his interception total by more than half from 2021, to six. Daniel Jones of the Giants was the only full-time starter with fewer picks.

Michael Ainsworth/AP Images

Chris Szagola/AP Images

Australian-born Jordan Mailata had never played a down of football when the Eagles selected him in the seventh round of the 2018 draft. He's now in his third season as the team's starting left tackle. Jake Elliott has made 85 percent of his career field-goal attempts, including 8-of-9 from 50 yards or longer over the past two years.

"To have him out there is like having Michael Jordan out there," Sirianni said after the Eagles' Divisional Playoff win over the Giants. "He's your leader; he's your guy. That's the biggest respect I can pay to him, comparing his being out there on the field to a Michael Jordan type."

As for the ground game, Hurts is one part of a versatile attack. Fourth-year pro Miles Sanders got the bulk of the carries and rewarded that trust with 1,269 yards – the first 1,000-yard season of his career – and a personal-best 11 TDs. Boston Scott and Kenneth Gainwell provide the depth, combining for another 457 yards and seven scores.

As a team, the Eagles led the league with 32 rushing touchdowns. Since the 1970 AFL-NFL merger, only the '76 Steelers (33) had more in a season.

With Brown in the fold, Philadelphia has one of the top pass-catching duos in the NFL. The Eagles used a first-round pick in 2021 to draft Heisman Trophy winner DeVonta Smith. After a modest rookie season, Smith led the team in '22 with 95 receptions. His 1,196 yards were second to Brown, who caught 88 passes for a career-high 1,496 yards. It's the first time in the Eagles' 89-year history that they've had a pair of 1,000-yard receivers. Smith and Brown accounted for 18 of the team's 25 touchdown receptions during the regular season.

Last season, the Eagles traded away veteran and fan favorite Zach Ertz because they knew Dallas Goedert was ready to step up and be the No. 1 tight end. Even after missing five games this season, the now-healthy Goedert finished third on the team in receptions, catching 55 passes for 702 yards and three scores.

"We know how important it is to get him the football," Sirianni says of Goedert.

All that offensive success really starts up front, where the line stacks up as perhaps the best in the NFL. Three starters – Kelce at center, Johnson at right tackle, and Seumalo at right guard – are ranked in the top seven at their respective positions according to Pro Football Focus.

The line also produced three Pro Bowl selections: Kelce earned his sixth nod, Johnson got his fourth, and left guard Landon Dickerson, a second-round pick in 2021, made his first Pro Bowl.

DEFENSE

Pressure, pressure, pressure. In a league that is all about the passing game, no team is

2022 RESULTS

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES (16-3)

9/11	Lions	38-35	W
9/19	VIKINGS	24-7	W
9/25	Commanders	24-8	W
10/2	JAGUARS	29-21	W
10/9	Cardinals	20-17	W
10/16	COWBOYS	26-17	W
10/30	STEELERS	35-13	W
11/3	Texans	29-17	W
11/14	COMMANDERS	21-32	L
11/20	Colts	17-16	W
11/27	PACKERS	40-33	W
12/4	TITANS	35-10	W
12/11	Giants	48-22	W
12/18	Bears	25-20	W
12/24	Cowboys	34-40	L
1/1	SAINTS	10-20	L
1/8	GIANTS	22-16	W
NFC Playoffs			
1/21	GIANTS	38-7	W
1/29	49ERS	31-7	W

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IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT XIAFLEX® (Zi a flex)
(collagenase clostridium histolyticum)

R_x Only

This is a brief summary of the most important information about XIAFLEX. It does not take the place of talking with your healthcare provider about your medical condition or treatment.

What is XIAFLEX?

XIAFLEX is a prescription medicine used to treat adult men with Peyronie's disease who have a "plaque" that can be felt and a curve in their penis greater than 30 degrees when treatment is started. It is not known if XIAFLEX is safe and effective in children under the age of 18.

Do not receive XIAFLEX if the Peyronie's plaque to be treated involves the "tube" that your urine passes through (urethra); or you are allergic to collagenase clostridium histolyticum, any of the ingredients in XIAFLEX, or to any other collagenase product.

Talk to your healthcare provider before receiving this medicine if you have any of these conditions.

What is the most important information I should know about XIAFLEX for the treatment of Peyronie's Disease?

XIAFLEX can cause serious side effects, including:

1. **Penile fracture (corporal rupture) or other serious injury to the penis.** Receiving an injection of XIAFLEX may cause damage to the tubes in your penis called the corpora. After treatment with XIAFLEX, one of these tubes may break during an erection and could require surgery to fix the damaged area. Damage to your penis might not get better after a corporal rupture.
   - After treatment with XIAFLEX, blood vessels in your penis may also break, causing blood to collect under the skin (hematoma). This could require a procedure to drain the blood from under the skin. If a hematoma appears, you may also develop skin and soft tissue necrosis (death of skin cells) which could require surgery.

   Symptoms of corporal rupture or other serious injury to your penis may include: a popping sound or sensation in an erect penis, sudden loss of the ability to maintain an erection, pain in your penis, purple bruising and swelling of your penis, difficulty urinating or blood in the urine.

   Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any of the symptoms of corporal rupture or serious injury to the penis listed above.

   Do not have sex or any other sexual activity between the first and second injections of a treatment cycle.

   Do not have sex or have any other sexual activity for at least 4 weeks after the second injection of a treatment cycle with XIAFLEX and after any pain and swelling has gone away.

   XIAFLEX for the treatment of Peyronie's disease is only available through a restricted program called the XIAFLEX Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategy (REMS) Program.
2. **Hypersensitivity reactions, including anaphylaxis.** Severe allergic reactions can happen in people who receive XIAFLEX, because it contains foreign proteins.

   Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any of these symptoms of an allergic reaction after an injection of XIAFLEX:
   - hives
   - swollen face
   - breathing trouble
   - chest pain
   - low blood pressure
   - dizziness or fainting
3. **Back pain reactions.** After receiving an injection of XIAFLEX for Peyronie's disease, you may suddenly feel back pain, including severe lower back pain moving to your legs, feet, chest and arms. The back pain may also include spasms and make it hard to walk. These symptoms usually go away in 15 minutes or less but may last longer.

   Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have sudden back pain, chest pain, or have a hard time walking after an injection.
4. **Fainting.** Fainting (passing out) or near fainting can happen in people who receive XIAFLEX, especially if they have severe penile pain. **If you have dizziness or feel faint after receiving XIAFLEX, lie down until the symptoms go away.**

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PD is a condition that involves a **buildup of scar tissue** that forms under the skin of the penis, **which can cause a bend in your erection.**

XIAFLEX is a **nonsurgical treatment** for appropriate men that gradually helps break up the scar tissue over 1 to 4 treatment cycles* with about 6 weeks between each cycle. When paired with daily gentle stretching and straightening of the penis, XIAFLEX is proven to help **gradually reduce the bend.**

*Results will vary.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before receiving XIAFLEX?

Before receiving XIAFLEX, tell your healthcare provider if you: have had an allergic reaction to a XIAFLEX injection in the past - have a bleeding problem - have received XIAFLEX to treat another condition - have any other medical conditions.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Using XIAFLEX with certain other medicines can cause serious side effects.

Especially tell your healthcare provider if you take medicines to thin your blood (anticoagulants). If you are told to stop taking a blood thinner before your XIAFLEX injection, your healthcare provider should tell you when to start taking the blood thinner again.

Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for a list of these medicines, if you are not sure.

Know the medicines you take. Keep a list of them to show to your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine.

How will I receive XIAFLEX?

- XIAFLEX should be injected into the plaque by a healthcare provider who is trained and experienced in treating adult men with Peyronie's disease.
- Your healthcare provider will inject XIAFLEX into the plaque that is causing your penis to curve.
- XIAFLEX is given as part of a treatment cycle. In each treatment cycle, you will receive an injection of XIAFLEX, followed by a second injection 1 to 3 days later.
- 1 to 3 days after your second injection of XIAFLEX in a treatment cycle, you will need to return to your healthcare provider's office for a manual procedure that will stretch and help straighten your penis. Your healthcare provider will tell you when to come back for this.
- You should gently stretch your penis 3 times a day for 6 weeks after each treatment cycle. **You should only gently stretch your penis when you do not have an erection.**
- You should gently straighten your penis 1 time a day for 6 weeks after each treatment cycle. **You should only gently straighten your penis if you have an erection that happens without any sexual activity (spontaneous erection).**
- **Do not use a vacuum erection device during your treatment with XIAFLEX.**
- Your healthcare provider will tell you when you can resume sexual activity after each treatment cycle.

Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have trouble stretching or straightening your penis, or if you have pain or other concerns.

What should I avoid while receiving XIAFLEX? Avoid situations that may cause you to strain your stomach (abdominal) muscles, such as straining during bowel movements.

What are the possible side effects of XIAFLEX?

XIAFLEX can cause serious side effects, including: increased chance of bleeding. Bleeding or bruising at the injection site can happen in people who receive XIAFLEX. Talk to your healthcare provider if you have a problem with your blood clotting. XIAFLEX may not be right for you.

The most common side effects with XIAFLEX for the treatment of Peyronie's disease include:

- a small collection of blood under the skin at the injection site (hematoma)
- swelling at the injection site or along your penis
- pain or tenderness at the injection site, along your penis and above your penis
- penis bruising
- itching of your penis or scrotum (genitals)
- painful erection
- erection problems (erectile dysfunction)
- changes in the color of the skin of your penis
- blisters at the injection site
- pain with sex
- a lump at the injection site (nodule)

These are not all of the possible side effects with XIAFLEX. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or does not go away. For more information, ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

General information about the safe and effective use of XIAFLEX. Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed. If you would like more information, talk to your healthcare provider. You can ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for information about XIAFLEX that is written for health professionals. For more information, go to www.XIAFLEX.com or call 1-800-462-3636.

You are encouraged to report side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.FDA.gov/medwatch or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

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Rich Schultz/AP Images

Chris Szagola/AP Images

Brandon Graham was one of the Eagles' heroes of Super Bowl LII, getting a strip-sack of Patriots QB Tom Brady that helped secure the victory. The defensive end's 11 sacks in 2022 were the most in his 13-year career. On his way to a fourth Pro Bowl honor, right tackle Lane Johnson helped the Eagles field one of the NFL's most balanced offenses.

better than the Eagles at getting to the opposing quarterback. Not only did they lead the NFL with 70 sacks, that number was 15 more than the No. 2 Kansas City Chiefs and tied for the third-most in a season in league history. As a result, Philadelphia also allowed the fewest passing yards per game (179.8).

The pass rush has seen a major improvement from a year ago. Philadelphia ranked 30th in the NFL in 2021 with just 29 total sacks. More important to this season's numbers, the production has come from multiple sources. The Eagles are the first team to have four players record 10-or-more sacks. Reddick led the way with 16, tied for second in the league. Defensive tackle Javon Hargrave and defensive ends Josh Sweat and Brandon Graham each had 11.

"It's always a priority for us philosophically to affect the quarterback," says defensive coordinator Jonathan Gannon. "You can do that a lot of different ways. We came out of last year knowing that we had to do better in this area. It's not [necessarily] a winning stat to me, but you do want to affect the quarterback."

Affecting the quarterback means forcing him to throw before he wants to in order to

BIRDS OF STEEL

Getty Images

There's not a lot of crossover between fans of the Eagles and Steelers. Though not technically rivals, each of the Keystone State's NFL entries has its own devoted fan base. Seldom are Jalen Hurts and Najee Harris jerseys found in the same closet. But in 1943, with so many NFL players called to duty at the height of World War II, the teams and their fans became birds of a feather for one season, as the short-handed Eagles and Steelers combined to form a single team. Officially the "Phil-Pitt Combine," the hybrid club was quickly dubbed the "Steagles."

The team split its home games between Philadelphia's Shibe Park and Pittsburgh's Forbes Field. Eagles head coach **Greasy Neale** and Steelers head coach Walt Kiesling shared head coaching duties, overseeing a squad slim on standout talents, with every member of the team also required to hold a full-time job at a defense plant. The Steagles' one player of note, future Hall of Fame end Bill Hewitt, who came out of retirement to join the team, retired again after six games.

Nonetheless, the Steagles got off to a fast 2-0 start with wins over the Brooklyn Dodgers and New York Giants on their way to a respectable 5-4-1 mark. Halfback Jack Hinkle ran for 571 yards, finishing second in the league in rushing. For the Eagles, who had gone 2-9 in 1942, it was the first winning season in franchise history. And in 1944, the Eagles, once again a stand-alone team, began their trek to becoming a standout franchise. Led by rookie halfback Steve Van Buren, Philadelphia went 7-1-2, and after the war, quickly established itself as a powerhouse, winning NFL titles in 1948 and 1949.

— Mark Preston

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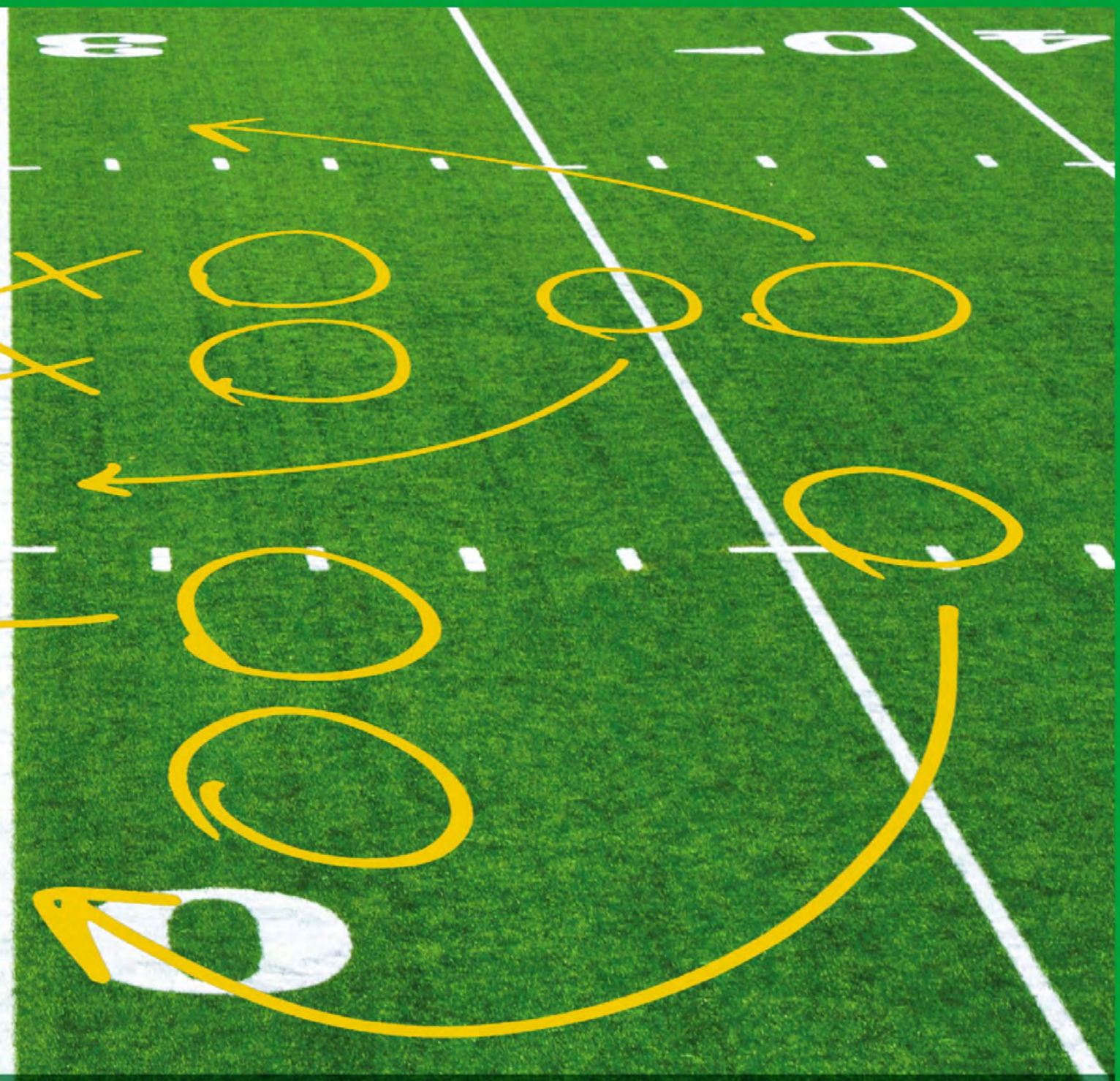

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On top of being one of the NFL's best centers, Jason Kelce is among the most durable. He has started 139 consecutive regular-season games, the longest active streak at his position.
Haason Reddick, who was raised in Camden, N.J., and starred at Temple University, signed with his hometown Eagles in 2022. He finished second in the NFL with 16 sacks.

avoid more sacks. And that has resulted in turnovers. Seven Eagles had at least one interception this season. The team finished with 17 picks, tied for fourth in the league.

During the Eagles' strong start, it became clear that the way to neutralize Philadelphia's pass rush was to run the ball. Roseman addressed that problem at mid-season by adding three veteran defensive linemen. He traded for Bears defensive end Robert Quinn and followed that acquisition by signing defensive tackles Linval Joseph and Ndamukong Suh. Between them, they possess 38 seasons of NFL experience and 10 Pro Bowl honors. Joseph (XLVI) and Suh (LV) also have Super Bowl rings.

With that trio joining Hargrave, Sweat, and Fletcher Cox on the defensive line, the Eagles have size, strength, and unmatched depth up front. The havoc they create has allowed linebackers T.J. Edwards and Kyzir White to step in and clean up. Edwards had 159 tackles, tied for seventh-most in the league. White had 110 tackles.

While the pass rushers have done a great job of finishing, Hargrave notes that the secondary has excelled at disguising coverages, which has forced quarterbacks to hold the football just a tick longer than they'd like.

It works well because the Eagles have an outstanding cornerback tandem in Darius Slay and Bradberry. Slay, a 10-year NFL veteran, gained his fifth Pro Bowl nod after intercepting three passes and defensing 14 others. Bradberry (3 interceptions, 17 passes defensed) is in his seventh year and signed with Philadelphia after spending two seasons with the rival Giants. He earned second-team All-Pro honors.

Gannon, in particular, knows their value.

"Those two corners, the way we change things, disguise things, play different coverages, what we ask them to do, their skill sets allow us to do that, and that's one of the reasons we're playing pretty good in the pass game," he says.

Another reason is safety Gardner-Johnson, who has made it a habit to be around the football. Despite missing five games due to injury, he still tied for the league lead with six interceptions.

Slay, Bradberry, and Gardner-Johnson have a combined 21 years of NFL experience. Sirianni says that has absolutely rubbed off on some of the younger players.

"Obviously, they've all played for such a

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Chris Szagola/AP Images

The big plays keep coming for Eagles cornerback Darius Slay, who had three interceptions in 2022.

long time that they have so much to offer to the rest of the room with their experiences, with their techniques, with their fundamentals, with their everything. Off-the-field, on-the-field experiences, both. We know our younger guys are getting that wealth of knowledge. … That's really huge."

SPECIAL TEAMS

The Eagles have a dependable scoring threat in sixth-year placekicker Jake Elliott, who booted three field goals in Super Bowl LII. Yet Philadelphia's offense has been so prolific that they only needed Elliott to attempt 23 field goals during the regular season. He converted 20 of them, with a long of 56 yards.

That offensive success also has meant a reduced workload for the punters. Arryn Siposs averaged 45.6 yards per punt before being injured in Week 14. Brett Kern, a three-time Pro Bowl selection, has filled the void since.

Both return men are solid. Boston Scott averaged 27.1 yards on kickoffs; Britain Covey averaged 9.3 yards per punt return.

Most importantly, the Eagles' special teams have done their job with few mistakes. And with such a deep roster, Philadelphia can afford to use key players like promising rookie linebacker Nakobe Dean – a third-round pick last April – on those units.

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES ALL-TIME PLAYOFF RESULTS

(25 wins, 24 losses)

Year	Round	Opponent	Score	W/L
1947	NFL Divisional	at Pittsburgh	21-0	W
	NFL Championship	at Chicago Cardinals	21-28	L
1948	NFL Championship	Chicago Cardinals	7-0	W
1949	NFL Championship	at Los Angeles Rams	14-0	W
1960	NFL Championship	Green Bay	17-13	W
1978	NFC Wild Card	at Atlanta	13-14	L
1979	NFC Wild Card	Chicago	27-17	W
	NFC Divisional	at Tampa Bay	17-24	L
1980	NFC Divisional	Minnesota	31-16	W
	NFC Championship	Dallas	20-7	W
	Super Bowl XV	**Oakland Raiders**	**10-27**	**L**
1981	NFC Wild Card	New York Giants	21-27	L
1988	NFC Divisional	at Chicago	12-20	L
1989	NFC Wild Card	Los Angeles Rams	7-21	L
1990	NFC Wild Card	Washington	6-20	L
1992	NFC Wild Card	at New Orleans	36-20	W
	NFC Divisional	at Dallas	10-34	L
1995	NFC Wild Card	Detroit	58-37	W
	NFC Divisional	at Dallas	11-30	L
1996	NFC Wild Card	at San Francisco	0-14	L
2000	NFC Wild Card	Tampa Bay	21-3	W
	NFC Divisional	at New York Giants	10-20	L
2001	NFC Wild Card	Tampa Bay	31-9	W
	NFC Divisional	at Chicago	33-19	W
	NFC Championship	at St. Louis Rams	24-29	L
2002	NFC Divisional	Atlanta	20-6	W
	NFC Championship	Tampa Bay	10-27	L
2003	NFC Divisional	Green Bay	20-17 (OT)	W
	NFC Championship	Carolina	3-14	L
2004	NFC Divisional	Minnesota	27-14	W
	NFC Championship	Atlanta	27-10	W
	Super Bowl XXXIX	**New England**	**21-24**	**L**
2006	NFC Wild Card	New York Giants	23-20	W
	NFC Divisional	at New Orleans	24-27	L
2008	NFC Wild Card	at Minnesota	26-14	W
	NFC Divisional	at New York Giants	23-11	W
	NFC Championship	at Arizona	25-32	L
2009	NFC Wild Card	at Dallas	14-34	L
2010	NFC Wild Card	Green Bay	16-21	L
2013	NFC Wild Card	New Orleans	24-26	L
2017	NFC Divisional	Atlanta	15-10	W
	NFC Championship	Minnesota	38-7	W
	Super Bowl LII	**New England**	**41-33**	**W**
2018	NFC Wild Card	at Chicago	16-15	W
	NFC Divisional	at New Orleans	14-20	L
2019	NFC Wild Card	Seattle	9-17	L
2021	NFC Wild Card	at Tampa Bay	15-31	L
2022	NFC Divisional	New York Giants	38-7	W
	NFC Championship	San Francisco	31-7	W

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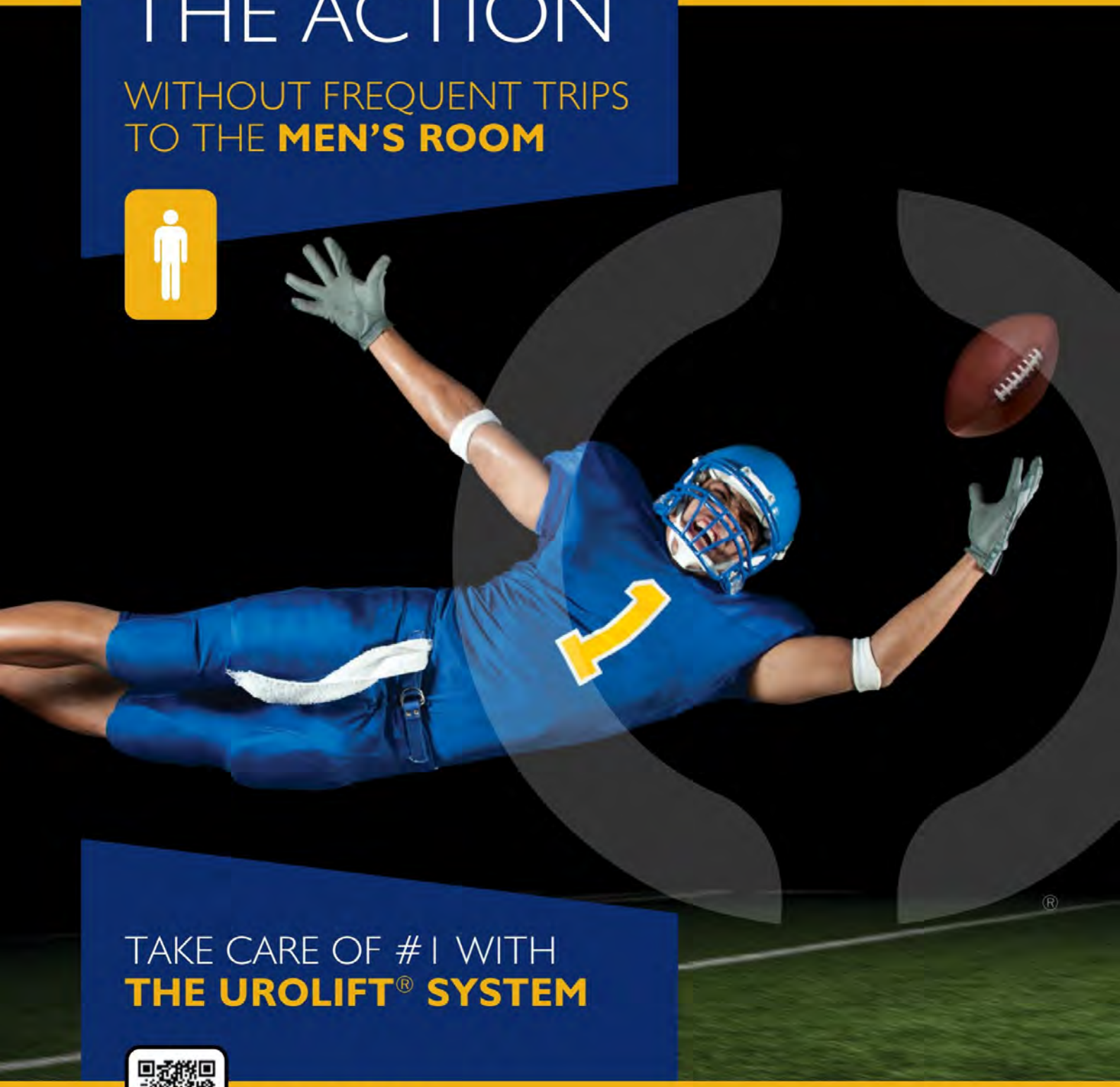

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1. Roehrborn. J Urol 2013

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GAME PLAN

With so many weapons on offense, this Eagles squad doesn't need to rely on trick plays – like the "Philly Special," which sparked the upset over Tom Brady and the Patriots in Super Bowl LII – to win.

"Offensively, I think we've proven that we can kind of win any way we need to," Sirianni says. "If we need to run it for 300 yards, we'll do that. If we need to throw it for 300 yards, we'll do that."

That balance begins with Hurts, whose skill set conjures up images of some of the best quarterbacks in franchise history – Randall Cunningham, Donovan McNabb, and Michael Vick among them. The Eagles have only lost one game all season with their young quarterback in the lineup. And at some point on Super Bowl Sunday, you can expect Hurts to make an impact with designed runs.

The problem for the defense is they don't know when those runs are coming, thus opening lanes for Sanders, Scott, and Gainwell in the ground game. That's before factoring in what's become an electrifying aerial attack. Finally, you need to account for Philly's aggressiveness in nearly any fourth-down situation.

Defensively, expect Reddick and the Eagles' front four to ratchet up the pressure. The team's pass rush is so consistent that it doesn't need to blitz often, which allows the back end to mix things up and do what it can to confuse opponents and force mistakes.

Perhaps the only way to defeat the Eagles is for the Eagles to beat themselves. Unfortunately for the opposition, that's a rarity. They were third in the NFL this season with a plus-8 turnover differential, tied for the fourth-most takeaways (27) and the fifth-fewest giveaways (19).

There was a sense the Eagles were headed in the right direction a season ago when they finished strong to make the playoffs, and key additions – and the growth of Hurts – have accelerated that development. In fact, it's taken them all the way to Arizona for the franchise's fourth Super Bowl appearance.

If all goes right, they'll next be seen in a Philly-style parade down Broad Street.

Craig Ellenport *is a senior editor at* Sports Illustrated. *He has covered the NFL for 25 years and is the author of* NFL 100: The Greatest Moments of the NFL's Century *(Triumph).*

NFC CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

EAGLES 31, 49ers 7

LINCOLN FINANCIAL FIELD
Philadelphia, Pa. **Jan. 29, 2023**

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
San Francisco	0	7	0	0	7
Philadelphia	7	14	7	3	31

1st Quarter

PHI Sanders 6 run (Elliott kick), 9:48

2nd Quarter

SF McCaffrey 23 run (Gould kick), 8:29
PHI Sanders 13 run (Elliott kick), 1:36
PHI Scott 10 run (Elliott kick), 0:16

3rd Quarter

PHI Hurts 1 run (Elliott kick), 0:43

4th Quarter

PHI Elliott 31 FG, 5:20

A workman-like performance worked out perfectly for the Eagles, who embraced the running game and leaned on their swarming defense to dominate the 49ers and advance to their fourth Super Bowl in team history.

The game swung during a pivotal second-quarter sequence. With things knotted, 7-7, following a 23-yard touchdown run by the 49ers' Christian McCaffrey, Eagles QB Jalen Hurts engineered a time-consuming 14-play march that included a gutsy fourth-and-1 conversion at the Philadelphia 34 and ended with a 13-yard Miles Sanders scamper into the end zone with 1:36 to go before halftime. The Eagles would have been content to take that lead into the locker room, but on the 49ers' second play after the TD, a fumbled snap ended up in the hands of linebacker Haason Reddick at the San Francisco 30. That set up Philly for a quick-strike touchdown – this one on a 10-yard Boston Scott run – that made it 21-7.

Hampering the 49ers' comeback hopes was their need to shuffle quarterbacks. Brock Purdy, himself the team's third starting QB on the season, was sidelined in the first quarter but returned when his replacement, Josh Johnson, had to leave the game in the third quarter.

Regardless of who was behind center for San Francisco, however, the Eagles' defense controlled the flow, allowing only 11 first downs and 164 total yards. Reddick led the way, collecting two sacks and a forced fumble. Defensive tackle Javon Hargrave contributed a sack and defensed a pass, while linebacker Kyzir White finished with a team-leading six tackles.

Philadelphia ground out 148 yards against the league's top-ranked rush defense – nearly twice the 77.7 yards per game the 49ers allowed during the regular-season – led by Kenneth Gainwell's 48 yards on 14 carries. Sanders finished the day with 42 yards, 27 of those coming on the tie-breaking touchdown drive. Hurts was steady in his role, completing 15 of 25 passes for 121 yards and running for another 39, including a 1-yard surge over the goal line for the game's final TD.

Standouts for San Francisco included linebacker Dre Greenlaw, who made a game-high nine tackles, and McCaffrey, who totaled 84 rushing yards and caught four passes out of the backfield for another 22 yards.

In achieving the victory, the Eagles became the first team in NFL history to score more than 30 points and allow fewer than 10 in back-to-back playoff wins.

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JEFFREY LURIE CHAIRMAN AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

JEFFREY LURIE is in his 29th season as Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Philadelphia Eagles. Lurie purchased the franchise on May 6, 1994, and instituted an organizational infrastructure that reflects the pride and passion of the region, where tireless work ethic and innovation deeply coincides with consistent results.

His commitment to excellence has launched an unprecedented era of success on the field, including the first Super Bowl championship in team history, when the Eagles defeated the New England Patriots, 41-33, in Super Bowl LII.

Today regarded among the most prominent franchises in professional sports, the Eagles began their ascent during the first full year of Lurie's ownership in 1995 and have since grown into a customary presence in the NFL's postseason. The Eagles are one of only two NFC teams with three Super Bowl appearances (XXXIX, LII, and LVII) since 2004 and lead the NFC (second overall) in conference title games (seven) dating back to 2001. In addition, the Eagles have earned 10 of their 12 all-time NFC East championships since 2001, which leads the division in that span.

Overall, the Eagles have made the playoffs 17 times under Lurie's direction and are tied for the third-most postseason bids in the NFL since the turn of the century (15), including trips in five of the last six seasons. Moreover, including playoffs, the Eagles have the league's sixth-highest winning percentage (.586, 233-164-2) since 2000.

Lurie's blueprint for success has had a profound impact on the field, leading to a greater overall winning percentage (.555, 275-220-3), more playoff games (31), and more playoff victories (17) than all previous ownership groups combined.

A thoughtful and compassionate philanthropist who has family ties to autism, Lurie is dedicated to raising critical research funds for the developmental disorder and has leveraged his resources as a professional sports owner to turn autism awareness into action.

In 2019, Lurie expanded on this commitment by launching the team's signature charitable initiative, the Eagles Autism Foundation, which has since raised more than $16 million to help drive scientific breakthroughs and establish Philadelphia as a major center for autism research and care.

Through the Eagles Autism Foundation, the organization is viewed nationally as a progressive leader in the autism community. Most notably, the Eagles Autism Challenge, which is the foundation's annual cycling and 5K run/walk event, generated a record $4.1 million in 2022.

Lurie earned a B.A. from Clark University, a master's degree in psychology from Boston University, and a Ph.D. in social policy from Brandeis University. He has served as an executive producer for Academy Award-winning documentaries such as *Summer of Soul* (2022), *Innocente* (2013), and *Inside Job* (2010). Most recently, Lurie formed Play/Action Pictures to produce socially impactful documentary films.

Born on Sept. 8, 1951, Lurie has two children. He resides in the Philadelphia area with his wife, Tina.

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Office of the Chairman/CEO

Frank Gumienny
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Chief Financial Officer

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Bob Lange
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Director
of Team Travel and
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Jeff Scott
Director
of Football Operations

Katie David
Football Operations
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Julian Lurie
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Matt Russell
Senior Personnel Director/
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Alan Wolking
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NICK SIRIANNI Head Coach

Nick Sirianni was named head coach of the Philadelphia Eagles on Jan. 24, 2021.

The product of a family of football coaches and educators, Sirianni developed a curriculum for building a winning culture that is grounded in five core values: connect, compete, accountability, football IQ, and fundamentals. Through these principles, he has guided the Eagles to playoff berths in back-to-back years, becoming the second head coach in team history to do so in their first two seasons.

In 2022, Sirianni directed Philadelphia to a 14-3 record (most wins in franchise history), becoming the fourth coach in NFL history to win 14 games in their first or second year as a head coach. The Eagles set team records for points (477), touchdowns (59), rushing TDs (32), red zone TD efficiency (67.8%), third-down conversions (45.9%), and sacks (70).

Many of Sirianni's players have enjoyed career years in 2022, including Jalen Hurts, who tied the franchise record with 35 total touchdowns. A.J. Brown set the team mark for receiving yards (1,496), and DeVonta Smith posted the most receptions (95) ever by an Eagles wide receiver.

Sirianni spent three years (2018-20) as the Colts' offensive coordinator. He also had stints with the Chargers (2013-17) and Chiefs (2009-12) after starting his coaching career at Mount Union (2004-05) and Indiana (Pa.) (2006-08). He was a three-year starting wide receiver at Mt. Union before graduating in 2004.

ASSISTANT COACHES

Tyler Brown.....Special Teams Quality Control
Michael Clay.....Special Teams Coordinator
Eric Dickerson.....Offensive Quality Control
Jonathan Gannon.....Defensive Coordinator
Roy Istvan.....Assistant Offensive Line
Brian Johnson.....Quarterbacks
Scott Kaniecki.....Administrative Assistant to the Head Coach
Joe Kasper.....Defensive Quality Control
D.K. McDonald.....Assistant Defensive Backs
Jason Michael.....Tight Ends
Aaron Moorehead.....Wide Receivers
T.J. Paganetti.....Offensive Quality Control
Joe Pannunzio.....Assistant Special Teams Coordinator
Kevin Patullo.....Passing Game Coordinator
Nick Rallis.....Linebackers
Tracy Rocker.....Defensive Line
Tyler Scudder.....Defensive Assistant
Jemal Singleton.....Running Backs/Assistant Head Coach
Shane Steichen.....Offensive Coordinator
Jeff Stoutland.....Run Game Coordinator/Offensive Line
Alex Tanney.....Assistant Quarterbacks/ Offensive Assistant
Jeremiah Washburn...Defensive Ends/Outside Linebackers
Dennard Wilson.....Defensive Passing Game Coordinator/Defensive Backs

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES ALPHABETICAL ROSTER

NO	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	BIRTH DATE	NFL EXP	COLLEGE	HOW ACQUIRED
32	Blankenship, Reed	S	6-1	203	3/2/99	R	Middle Tennessee State	UDFA '22
19	Book, Ian	QB	6-0	206	3/30/98	2	Notre Dame	W (NO) '22
24	Bradberry, James	CB	6-1	212	8/4/93	7	Samford	FA '22
11	Brown, A.J.	WR	6-1	226	6/30/97	4	Mississippi	T (Tenn.) '22
81	Calcaterra, Grant	TE	6-4	240	12/4/98	R	Southern Methodist	D6b '22
18	Covey, Britain	WR	5-8	173	3/18/97	R	Utah	UDFA '22
91	Cox, Fletcher	DT	6-4	310	12/13/90	11	Mississippi State	D1 '12
90	Davis, Jordan	DT	6-6	336	1/12/00	R	Georgia	D1 '22
17	Dean, Nakobe	LB	5-11	231	12/13/00	R	Georgia	D3 '22
69	Dickerson, Landon	G	6-6	332	9/30/98	2	Alabama	D2 '21
77	Dillard, Andre	T	6-5	315	10/3/95	4	Washington State	D1 '19
63	Driscoll, Jack	T/G	6-5	312	4/1/97	3	Auburn	D4b '20
57	Edwards, T.J.	LB	6-1	242	8/12/96	4	Wisconsin	UDFA '19
4	Elliott, Jake	K	5-9	167	1/21/95	6	Memphis	PS (Cin.) '17
53	Elliss, Christian	LB	6-3	231	1/2/99	1	Idaho	FA '21
22	Epps, Marcus	S	6-0	191	1/27/96	4	Wyoming	W (Min.) '19
14	Gainwell, Kenneth	RB	5-9	200	3/14/99	2	Memphis	D5 '21
23	Gardner-Johnson, C.J.	S	5-11	210	12/20/97	4	Florida	T (NO) '22
88	Goedert, Dallas	TE	6-5	256	1/3/95	5	South Dakota State	D2 '18
55	Graham, Brandon	DE	6-2	265	4/3/88	13	Michigan	D1 '10
97	Hargrave, Javon	DT	6-2	305	2/7/93	7	South Carolina State	FA (Pitt.) '20
1	Hurts, Jalen	QB	6-1	223	8/7/98	3	Oklahoma	D2 '20
28	Jobe, Josh	CB	5-11	190	4/9/98	R	Alabama	UDFA '22
58	Johnson, Kyron	LB	6-0	235	7/24/98	R	Kansas	D6a '22
65	Johnson, Lane	T	6-6	325	5/8/90	10	Oklahoma	D1 '13
48	Johnson, Patrick	LB	6-2	248	1/10/98	2	Tulane	D7 '21
72	Joseph, Linval	DT	6-4	329	10/10/88	13	East Carolina	FA (LAC) '22
51	Jurgens, Cam	C/G	6-3	303	8/21/99	R	Nebraska	D2 '22
62	Kelce, Jason	C	6-3	295	11/5/87	12	Cincinnati	D6a '11
13	Kern, Brett	P	6-2	214	2/17/86	15	Toledo	FA '22
45	Lovato, Rick	LS	6-2	249	9/9/92	6	Old Dominion	FA '16
29	Maddox, Avonte	CB	5-9	184	3/31/96	5	Pittsburgh	D4a '18
68	Mailata, Jordan	T	6-8	365	3/31/97	5	–	D7 '18
27	McPhearson, Zech	CB	5-11	191	3/21/98	2	Texas Tech	D4 '21
10	Minshew, Gardner	QB	6-1	225	5/16/96	4	Washington State	T (Jax.) '21
3	Pascal, Zach	WR	6-2	215	12/18/94	5	Old Dominion	FA (Ind.) '22
98	Quinn, Robert	DE	6-4	245	5/18/90	12	North Carolina	T (Chi.) '22
7	Reddick, Haason	LB	6-1	240	9/22/94	6	Temple	FA (Car.) '22
26	Sanders, Miles	RB	5-11	211	5/1/97	4	Penn State	D2a '19
35	Scott, Boston	RB	5-6	203	4/27/95	4	Louisiana Tech	PS (NO) '18
33	Scott, Josiah	CB	5-9	185	4/5/99	3	Michigan State	T (Jax.) '21
34	Sermon, Trey	RB	6-0	215	1/30/99	2	Ohio State	W (SF) '22
56	Seumalo, Isaac	G	6-4	303	10/29/93	7	Oregon State	D3 '16
61	Sills, Josh	G	6-6	325	1/26/98	R	Oklahoma State	UDFA '22
2	Slay, Darius	CB	6-0	190	1/1/91	10	Mississippi State	T (Det.) '20
6	Smith, DeVonta	WR	6-0	170	11/14/98	2	Alabama	D1 '21
89	Stoll, Jack	TE	6-4	247	1/28/98	2	Nebraska	UDFA '21
74	Suh, Ndamukong	DT	6-4	313	1/6/87	13	Nebraska	FA (TB) '22
94	Sweat, Josh	DE	6-5	265	3/29/97	5	Florida State	D4b '18
42	Wallace, K'Von	S	5-11	205	7/25/97	3	Clemson	D4a '20
16	Watkins, Quez	WR	6-0	193	6/9/98	3	Southern Mississippi	D6b '20
43	White, Kyzir	LB	6-2	234	3/24/96	5	West Virginia	FA (LAC) '22
93	Williams, Milton	DT	6-3	290	4/6/99	2	Louisiana Tech	D3 '21

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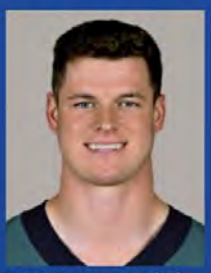

Reed Blankenship (32)
Safety

Ian Book (19)
Quarterback

James Bradberry (24)
Cornerback

A.J. Brown (11)
Wide Receiver

Grant Calcaterra (81)
Tight End

Britain Covey (18)
Wide Receiver

Fletcher Cox (91)
Defensive Tackle

Jordan Davis (90)
Defensive Tackle

Nakobe Dean (17)
Linebacker

Landon Dickerson (69)
Guard

Andre Dillard (77)
Tackle

Jack Driscoll (63)
Tackle/Guard

T.J. Edwards (57)
Linebacker

Jake Elliott (4)
Kicker

Christian Elliss (53)
Linebacker

Marcus Epps (22)
Safety

Kenneth Gainwell (14)
Running Back

C.J. Gardner-Johnson (23)
Safety

Dallas Goedert (88)
Tight End

Brandon Graham (55)
Defensive End

Javon Hargrave (97)
Defensive Tackle

Jalen Hurts (1)
Quarterback

Josh Jobe (28)
Cornerback

Kyron Johnson (58)
Linebacker

Lane Johnson (65)
Tackle

Patrick Johnson (48)
Linebacker

Linval Joseph (72)
Defensive Tackle

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Center/Guard

Jason Kelce (62)
Center

Brett Kern (13)
Punter

Rick Lovato (45)
Long Snapper

Avonte Maddox (29)
Cornerback

Jordan Mailata (68)
Tackle

Zech McPhearson (27)
Cornerback

Gardner Minshew (10)
Quarterback

Zach Pascal (3)
Wide Receiver

Robert Quinn (98)
Defensive End

Haason Reddick (7)
Linebacker

Miles Sanders (26)
Running Back

Boston Scott (35)
Running Back

Josiah Scott (33)
Cornerback

Trey Sermon (34)
Running Back

Isaac Seumalo (56)
Guard

Josh Sills (61)
Guard

Darius Slay (2)
Cornerback

DeVonta Smith (6)
Wide Receiver

Jack Stoll (89)
Tight End

Ndamukong Suh (74)
Defensive Tackle

Josh Sweat (94)
Defensive End

K'Von Wallace (42)
Safety

Quez Watkins (16)
Wide Receiver

Kyzir White (43)
Linebacker

Milton Williams (93)
Defensive Tackle

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PHILADELPHIA EAGLES
STATS/ROSTER/LINEUPS

STATISTICAL LEADERS

PASSING	COMP-ATT	PCT	YDS	TD	INT	RTNG
JALEN HURTS	306-460	66.5	3701	22	6	101.6

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
MILES SANDERS	259	1269	4.9	40	11
JALEN HURTS	165	760	4.6	42	13

RECEIVING	NO	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
DEVONTA SMITH	95	1196	12.6	45	7
A.J. BROWN	88	1496	17.0	78	11
DALLAS GOEDERT	55	702	12.8	31	3
QUEZ WATKINS	33	354	10.7	53	3

DEFENSE	TACKLES	ASSISTS	TOTAL	SACKS	PD	FF
T.J. EDWARDS	99	60	159	2.0	7	0
KYZIR WHITE	66	44	110	1.5	7	0
MARCUS EPPS	68	24	92	0.0	6	1
C.J. GARDNER-JOHNSON	61	6	67	1.0	8	0
JAVON HARGRAVE	37	23	60	11.0	2	1
DARIUS SLAY	40	15	55	0.0	14	0
HAASON REDDICK	35	14	49	16.0	3	5
JOSH SWEAT	31	17	48	11.0	1	1

INTERCEPTIONS	NO	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
C.J. GARDNER-JOHNSON	6	54	9.0	25	0
JAMES BRADBERRY	3	54	18.0	27	1
DARIUS SLAY	3	17	5.7	19	0

KICK RETURNS	RET	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
BOSTON SCOTT	15	406	27.1	66	0

PUNT RETURNS	RET	FC	AVG	LONG	TD
BRITAIN COVEY	33	18	9.3	27	0

PUNTING	NO	AVG	NET	TCHBK	IN/20	LONG
ARRYN SIPOSS	44	45.6	39.6	3	16	59

FIELD GOALS	TOTAL	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+
JAKE ELLIOTT	20/23	0/0	6/6	8/9	1/2	5/6

OFFENSIVE DEPTH CHART

WR	11	A.J. BROWN
	3	ZACH PASCAL
LT	68	JORDAN MAILATA
	77	ANDRE DILLARD
LG	69	LANDON DICKERSON
C	62	JASON KELCE
	51	CAM JURGENS
RG	56	ISAAC SEUMALO
	61	JOSH SILLS
RT	65	LANE JOHNSON
	63	JACK DRISCOLL
TE	88	DALLAS GOEDERT
	89	JACK STOLL
	81	GRANT CALCATERRA
WR	16	QUEZ WATKINS
	18	BRITAIN COVEY
WR	6	DEVONTA SMITH
RB	26	MILES SANDERS
	35	BOSTON SCOTT
	14	KENNETH GAINWELL
	34	TREY SERMON
QB	1	JALEN HURTS
	10	GARDNER MINSHEW
	19	IAN BOOK

DEFENSIVE DEPTH CHART

DE	55	BRANDON GRAHAM
	98	ROBERT QUINN
DT	91	FLETCHER COX
	74	NDAMUKONG SUH
	93	MILTON WILLIAMS
DT	97	JAVON HARGRAVE
	90	JORDAN DAVIS
	72	LINVAL JOSEPH
DE	94	JOSH SWEAT
SAM	7	HAASON REDDICK
	48	PATRICK JOHNSON
MIKE	57	T.J. EDWARDS
	17	NAKOBE DEAN
WILL	43	KYZIR WHITE
CB	24	JAMES BRADBERRY
	28	JOSH JOBE
CB	2	DARIUS SLAY
	27	ZECH MCPHEARSON
NCB	29	AVONTE MADDOX
	33	JOSIAH SCOTT
S	22	MARCUS EPPS
	42	K'VON WALLACE
S	23	C.J. GARDNER-JOHNSON
	32	REED BLANKENSHIP

SPECIALISTS DEPTH CHART

P	13	BRETT KERN
K	4	JAKE ELLIOTT
H	13	BRETT KERN
LS	45	RICK LOVATO
PR	18	BRITAIN COVEY
	6	DEVONTA SMITH
KR	35	BOSTON SCOTT
	18	BRITAIN COVEY
	16	QUEZ WATKINS

NUMERICAL ROSTER

1	JALEN HURTS	QB
2	DARIUS SLAY	CB
3	ZACH PASCAL	WR
4	JAKE ELLIOTT	K
6	DEVONTA SMITH	WR
7	HAASON REDDICK	LB
10	GARDNER MINSHEW	QB
11	A.J. BROWN	WR
13	BRETT KERN	P
14	KENNETH GAINWELL	RB
16	QUEZ WATKINS	WR
17	NAKOBE DEAN	LB
18	BRITAIN COVEY	WR
19	IAN BOOK	QB
22	MARCUS EPPS	S
23	C.J. GARDNER-JOHNSON	S
24	JAMES BRADBERRY	CB
26	MILES SANDERS	RB
27	ZECH MCPHEARSON	CB
28	JOSH JOBE	CB
29	AVONTE MADDOX	CB
32	REED BLANKENSHIP	S
33	JOSIAH SCOTT	CB
34	TREY SERMON	RB
35	BOSTON SCOTT	RB
42	K'VON WALLACE	S
43	KYZIR WHITE	LB
45	RICK LOVATO	LS
48	PATRICK JOHNSON	LB
51	CAM JURGENS	C/G
53	CHRISTIAN ELLISS	LB
55	BRANDON GRAHAM	DE
56	ISAAC SEUMALO	G
57	T.J. EDWARDS	LB
58	KYRON JOHNSON	LB
61	JOSH SILLS	G
62	JASON KELCE	C
63	JACK DRISCOLL	T/G
65	LANE JOHNSON	T
68	JORDAN MAILATA	T
69	LANDON DICKERSON	G
72	LINVAL JOSEPH	DT
74	NDAMUKONG SUH	DT
77	ANDRE DILLARD	T
81	GRANT CALCATERRA	TE
88	DALLAS GOEDERT	TE
89	JACK STOLL	TE
90	JORDAN DAVIS	DT
91	FLETCHER COX	DT
93	MILTON WILLIAMS	DT
94	JOSH SWEAT	DE
97	JAVON HARGRAVE	DT
98	ROBERT QUINN	DE

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KANSAS CITY CHIEFS
STATS/ROSTER/LINEUPS

NUMERICAL ROSTER

1	JERICK McKINNON	RB
2	RONALD JONES	RB
4	CHAD HENNE	QB
5	TOMMY TOWNSEND	P
6	BRYAN COOK	S
7	HARRISON BUTKER	K
8	CARLOS DUNLAP	DE
9	JuJu SMITH-SCHUSTER	WR
10	ISIAH PACHECO	RB
11	MARQUEZ VALDES-SCANTLING	WR
12	SHANE BUECHELE	QB
13	NAZEEH JOHNSON	S
15	PATRICK MAHOMES	QB
17	MECOLE HARDMAN	WR
19	KADARIUS TONEY	WR
20	JUSTIN REID	S
21	TRENT McDUFFIE	CB
22	JUAN THORNHILL	S
23	JOSHUA WILLIAMS	CB
24	SKYY MOORE	WR
26	DEON BUSH	S
32	NICK BOLTON	LB
35	JAYLEN WATSON	CB
38	L'JARIUS SNEED	CB
41	JAMES WINCHESTER	LS
43	JACK COCHRANE	LB
45	MICHAEL BURTON	FB
47	DARIUS HARRIS	LB
50	WILLIE GAY	LB
51	MIKE DANNA	DE
52	CREED HUMPHREY	C
54	LEO CHENAL	LB
55	FRANK CLARK	DE
56	GEORGE KARLAFTIS	DE
57	ORLANDO BROWN	T
59	JOSHUA KAINDOH	DE
62	JOE THUNEY	G
65	TREY SMITH	G
66	BRANDON WILLIAMS	DT
67	LUCAS NIANG	T
70	PRINCE TEGA WANOGHO	T
73	NICK ALLEGRETTI	G
75	DARIAN KINNARD	T
77	ANDREW WYLIE	T
81	BLAKE BELL	TE
83	NOAH GRAY	TE
84	JUSTIN WATSON	WR
87	TRAVIS KELCE	TE
88	JODY FORTSON	TE
91	DERRICK NNADI	DT
94	MALIK HERRING	DE
95	CHRIS JONES	DT
99	KHALEN SAUNDERS	DT

STATISTICAL LEADERS

PASSING	COMP-ATT	PCT	YDS	TD	INT	RTNG
PATRICK MAHOMES	435-648	67.1	5250	41	12	105.2

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
ISIAH PACHECO	170	830	4.9	31	5
PATRICK MAHOMES	61	358	5.9	20	4
CLYDE EDWARDS-HELAIRE	71	302	4.3	52	3

RECEIVING	NO	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
TRAVIS KELCE	110	1338	12.2	52	12
JuJu SMITH-SCHUSTER	78	933	12.0	53	3
JERICK McKINNON	56	512	9.1	56	9
MARQUEZ VALDES-SCANTLING	42	687	16.4	57	2
NOAH GRAY	28	299	10.7	27	1
MECOLE HARDMAN	25	297	11.9	36	4

DEFENSE	TACKLES	ASSISTS	TOTAL	SACKS	PD	FF
NICK BOLTON	108	72	180	2.0	3	1
L'JARIUS SNEED	75	33	108	3.5	11	3
WILLIE GAY	51	37	88	2.5	8	0
JUSTIN REID	59	22	81	1.0	7	0
JUAN THORNHILL	43	28	71	1.0	9	0
KHALEN SAUNDERS	22	26	48	3.5	1	0
JAYLEN WATSON	37	9	46	0.0	6	0
CHRIS JONES	30	14	44	15.5	4	2

INTERCEPTIONS	NO	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
L'JARIUS SNEED	3	57	19.0	26	0
JUAN THORNHILL	3	0	0.0	0	0

KICK RETURNS	RET	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
ISIAH PACHECO	29	597	20.6	48	0

PUNT RETURNS	RET	FC	AVG	LONG	TD
SKYY MOORE	14	4	6.1	15	0

PUNTING	NO	AVG	NET	TCHBK	IN/20	LONG
TOMMY TOWNSEND	53	50.4	45.6	4	22	76

FIELD GOALS	TOTAL	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+
HARRISON BUTKER	18/24	0/0	7/7	4/5	4/5	3/7

OFFENSIVE DEPTH CHART

WR	9	JuJu SMITH-SCHUSTER
	24	SKYY MOORE
LT	57	ORLANDO BROWN
	70	PRINCE TEGA WANOGHO
LG	62	JOE THUNEY
	73	NICK ALLEGRETTI
C	52	CREED HUMPHREY
	73	NICK ALLEGRETTI
RG	65	TREY SMITH
	73	NICK ALLEGRETTI
RT	77	ANDREW WYLIE
	75	DARIAN KINNARD
TE	87	TRAVIS KELCE
	83	NOAH GRAY
WR	11	MARQUEZ VALDES-SCANTLING
	19	KADARIUS TONEY
QB	15	PATRICK MAHOMES
	4	CHAD HENNE
RB	10	ISIAH PACHECO
	1	JERICK McKINNON
FB	45	MICHAEL BURTON

DEFENSIVE DEPTH CHART

DE	51	MIKE DANNA
	56	GEORGE KARLAFTIS
DT	91	DERRICK NNADI
	99	KHALEN SAUNDERS
DT	95	CHRIS JONES
	66	BRANDON WILLIAMS
DE	55	FRANK CLARK
	8	CARLOS DUNLAP
LB	32	NICK BOLTON
	47	DARIUS HARRIS
LB	50	WILLIE GAY
	43	JACK COCHRANE
LB	54	LEO CHENAL
	43	JACK COCHRANE
CB	38	L'JARIUS SNEED
	23	JOSHUA WILLIAMS
CB	21	TRENT McDUFFIE
	35	JAYLEN WATSON
S	22	JUAN THORNHILL
	26	DEON BUSH
S	20	JUSTIN REID
	6	BRYAN COOK

SPECIALISTS DEPTH CHART

P	5	TOMMY TOWNSEND
K	7	HARRISON BUTKER
H	5	TOMMY TOWNSEND
LS	41	JAMES WINCHESTER
PR	19	KADARIUS TONEY
	84	JUSTIN WATSON
KR	10	ISIAH PACHECO
	24	SKYY MOORE

CHIEFS BRING THEIR SHOW TO THE DESERT

BY MICHAEL PRESTON

THE CHIEFS ARE PERENNIAL Super Bowl contenders with an iconic, generational quarterback leading a relentless offensive onslaught. Add in a defense that seems to peak as temperatures plunge and a head coach who's won more postseason games than anyone not named Bill Belichick, and you've created a nearly perfect recipe for success.

Even then, it's difficult to fully digest what Kansas City has accomplished in recent years: seven consecutive AFC West championships, five straight conference title game appearances, and the potential for a second Lombardi Trophy in four seasons. And although past performance is no guarantee of future results, the Chiefs arrive in Arizona red hot, having won 12 of their last 13 games. The Eagles better be on alert.

There have been several statement wins along the way, too, the first coming in Week 4, a 41-31 victory over Tampa Bay highlighted by three Mahomes touchdown passes. Standing at 4-2 following a defeat at home to Buffalo, the Chiefs have lost only once since – on the road against the Bengals – and they avenged that setback two weeks ago in the AFC Championship Game. That win gave Reid 21 postseason victories, moving him into second place all time behind only Belichick's 31.

Patrick Mahomes led the NFL in TD passes (41) and passing yards (5,250), and had a career-best 67.1 completion percentage.

Along with the statement wins, there have been stellar performances. In the Divisional round, Travis Kelce caught 14 passes for 98 yards and two touchdowns, setting a playoff receptions record for tight ends, as the Chiefs outlasted a stubborn Jaguars squad, 27-20.

Befitting their strong season, the Chiefs saw an AFC-leading seven players selected to the Pro Bowl: Mahomes, Kelce, left tackle Orlando Brown, center Creed Humphrey, defensive tackle Chris Jones, right guard Joe Thuney, and punter Tommy Townsend.

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A seventh-round draft pick out of Rutgers, running back Isiah Pacheco has burst onto the scene in his rookie season, rushing for a team-leading 830 yards and five touchdowns.
Defensive tackle Chris Jones matched his career-high and ranked second in the AFC with 15.5 sacks in 2022, and now has 65 sacks in 107 career games.

Super Bowl I, the Chiefs won their first title in Super Bowl IV, a victory immortalized by NFL Films' sideline footage of head coach Hank Stram. This season, the team wore a No. 16 helmet decal honoring that game's MVP, quarterback Len Dawson, who passed away last August.

Fittingly, a half century after Dawson's star performance, the Chiefs rallied to defeat the San Francisco 49ers in Super Bowl LIV behind Mahomes' MVP effort. With Dawson's memory renewed in 2022, perhaps another title is in the stars.

OFFENSE

The numbers tell the story: The Chiefs boast the NFL's top offense, leading the league in yards per game (413.6), points scored (496), and net passing yards (5,062) this season.

Mahomes is, of course, at the heart of those stats, having paced the NFL with his 5,250 passing yards and 41 touchdowns.

The trade of speedster Tyreek Hill last offseason had some fans wondering how Kansas City would fill the void, but all it meant were new targets for the sixth-year quarterback and a reshaped and more versatile unit. Mahomes threw only one touchdown pass longer than 30 yards during the regular season – he had 34 the previous four years – and spread the ball around. He connected with 11 different teammates for TDs.

"He's done a great job of working with change," Reid says of Mahomes. "That was something that he didn't have to worry about for a few years. So all of a sudden, his coach leaves – his position coach – a new one comes in; he works with that. He didn't flinch on it; he didn't complain. That's why my hat goes off to him for doing that and playing at the level he's playing at."

Mahomes' scrambling ability has been another factor in the Chiefs' offense. In the regular season, he ran for 358 yards and four touchdowns, establishing an NFL record for combined total yards in a season (5,614).

Kelce's team-leading 12-touchdown haul ranked second in the league, contributing to his eighth consecutive Pro Bowl selection, and his 110 receptions were third-most (only one other tight end made the top 25). Kelce also led all NFL players in red zone targets, catches, and touchdown receptions.

It's no surprise to find Kelce on the receiving end of a Mahomes TD throw, but second on that list in 2022 was running back Jerick McKinnon, who snagged nine.

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Alex Menendez/AP Images

Rob Saller/AP Images

Center Creed Humphrey earned his first Pro Bowl honor after centering an offense that led the NFL in yards per game (413.6) and points per game (29.2). Travis Kelce now owns three of the top five single-season marks for receiving yards by a tight end. He set the record in 2020 (1,416 yards) and this year's 1,338 yards ranks fourth.

Among the array of wide receivers who've contributed this season, only Mecole Hardman (25 catches, 4 TDs) had lined up alongside Mahomes prior to 2022. JuJu Smith-Schuster arrived from the Steelers and brought the ability to improvise on routes, helping him become the second-most targeted receiver – with 933 yards and three TDs on 78 catches.

Marquez Valdes-Scantling, formerly of the Packers, emerged as more than a speed guy, snaring 42 passes for 687 yards and two touchdowns. Add in rookie Skyy Moore, along with the play of newcomers Kadarius Toney (acquired from the Giants at midseason) and Justin Watson, and Mahomes has a supporting cast that can worry any defense.

The backfield combination of nine-year veteran McKinnon and rookie Isiah Pacheco has added to the Chiefs' unpredictability on offense. Their partnership blossomed even more after former first-round draft pick Clyde Edwards-Helaire, an 800-yard rusher as a rookie in 2020, was sidelined with a high ankle sprain in November.

No other NFL running back came close to McKinnon's number of receiving TDs, which tied for sixth in the league and included eight scoring grabs in the final six games. He also recorded the most yards on catches from the backfield in the second half of the season and, equally valuable, is adept at protecting Mahomes against the blitz.

"Jerick is doing a great job," running backs coach Greg Lewis says. "The opportunities that he has been presented with, he has taken advantage of them. I'm excited for him moving forward."

Pacheco's aggressive rushing style produced 830 yards, fourth-best among rookies, at an average of 4.9 yards per carry. He pounded out a game-high 95 rushing yards in the Divisional Playoffs against Jacksonville.

The Chiefs' offensive line is as good as any in the game, as proven by their three Pro Bowl representatives (which doesn't even include guard Trey Smith, who was voted in as an alternate). Andrew Wylie starts at right tackle and Nick Allegretti slots in at multiple spots in the rotation. The line's protection meant that Mahomes was sacked only 26 times this season, third-fewest of any 17-game starting quarterback.

DEFENSE

Only four teams allowed fewer rushing TDs than the Chiefs in 2022. In addition, the team's 55 sacks were second-best in the

2022 RESULTS

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS (16-3)

9/11	Cardinals	44-21	W
9/15	CHARGERS	27-24	W
9/25	Colts	17-20	L
10/2	Buccaneers	41-31	W
10/10	RAIDERS	30-29	W
10/16	BILLS	20-24	L
10/23	49ers	44-23	W
11/6	TITANS	20-17 (OT)	W
11/13	JAGUARS	27-17	W
11/20	Chargers	30-27	W
11/27	RAMS	26-10	W
12/4	Bengals	24-27	L
12/11	Broncos	34-28	W
12/18	Texans	30-24 (OT)	W
12/24	SEAHAWKS	24-10	W
1/1	BRONCOS	27-24	W
1/7	Raiders	31-13	W
AFC Playoffs			
1/21	JAGUARS	27-20	W
1/29	BENGALS	23-20	W

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Eric Christian Smith/AP Images

Peter Aiken/AP Images

Defensive end Frank Clark continues to be one of the game's biggest disrupters, this season collecting 39 tackles, five sacks, and 13 QB hits. JuJu Smith-Schuster's first season in Kansas City has been a productive one. He led all Chiefs wide receivers with 78 receptions, had three touchdowns, and averaged 12.0 yards per catch.

league – one season after they ranked in the bottom four in that category. Even the red zone defense, an Achilles heel early on in 2022, has improved throughout the season. The bottom line is that coordinator Steve Spagnuolo's unit is on the upswing.

Six rookies feature prominently, bringing youth and athleticism to a unit that moved on from some staples of a roster that made back-to-back Super Bowl appearances.

Defensive end George Karlaftis is a prime example of how the defense has found its footing, recording at least a half-sack in six of the final seven regular-season games. The first-round pick finished third among NFL rookies with six sacks as the Chiefs dropped opposing QBs 24 more times than they did in 2021.

Fellow ends Mike Danna and Frank Clark each weighed in with five sacks. Clark is an impact player who thrives despite the constraint of often being double-teamed, and has a knack for forcing big plays.

The Chiefs' pass-rush benefited from the addition of 13-year veteran Carlos Dunlap. The two-time Pro Bowler rotates in to great effect and excels at batting passes at the line of scrimmage. Khalen Saunders is another

KICKING THE CHIEFS INTO HIGH GEAR

William P. Straeter/AP Images

Growing up in Norway, **Jan Stenerud** knew little about football. An outstanding ski jumper, Stenerud had Olympic dreams when he came to the U.S. to attend Montana State University on a ski scholarship. There, Stenerud kept his legs strong by kicking a football, and once his remarkable kicking abilities became obvious, he abandoned his downhill dreams to focus on uprights. Joining the Montana State football team in his senior year, Stenerud turned heads by kicking a then-NCAA record 59-yard field goal.

Drafted by the Kansas City Chiefs in 1966, Stenerud became the first Norwegian to play in the NFL, and from 1967-79, his leg helped boot the Chiefs into prominence. In Super Bowl IV, Stenerud connected on three field goals – including a then-Super Bowl record 48-yard kick – to account for the first nine points of the game, giving his team a leg up over the heavily favored Minnesota Vikings. From there, the Chiefs went on to capture their franchise-first Super Bowl with a 23-7 win.

Now 80, Stenerud spent 13 seasons with the Chiefs, connecting on 279 field goals, and he finished his 19-year NFL career with 373. His 1,231 points with the Chiefs is second-most in franchise history, behind only Nick Lowery's 1,466. Six times he was selected to the Pro Bowl, and in 1991, Stenerud became the first pure placekicker enshrined in the Pro Football Hall of Fame. His No. 3 has been retired by the Chiefs, and in 2019, he was one of two kickers – alongside Adam Vinatieri – named to the NFL's 100th Anniversary All-Time Team.

"He helped us become one of the winningest teams in the National Football League," said legendary Chiefs coach Hank Stram, when introducing his kicker at Stenerud's Hall of Fame induction. "No one was better than Jan when the game was on the line."

—Mark Preston

factor in the Chiefs' defensive strides, posting career-high stats as a key role player and stuffing the run with fellow tackle Derrick Nnadi.

Chris Jones is Kansas City's defensive lynchpin at tackle, dominating the line on his way to a fourth consecutive Pro Bowl selection. As a fearsome pass-rusher, Jones led all NFL interior linemen – and tied for fourth among all players – with 15.5 sacks.

"It's a thing of beauty when all four are in unison and they're working toward the quarterback and staying alive in the hunt," says defensive line coach Joe Cullen, who was hired this season to address the team's pass-rush needs.

Linebacker Nick Bolton posted a franchise-record 180 tackles this season, second-most in the NFL. The defensive signal-caller has played almost every snap, and when the Chiefs held NFL rushing leader Josh Jacobs of the Raiders to a season-low 2.6 yards per carry in Week 18, Bolton recorded 16 tackles, eight solo. And he seems to be picking up on the theme of big plays; his fumble recovery in the fourth quarter of the Divisional Playoffs shut down a Jaguars comeback attempt.

The explosive Willie Gay put up the best numbers of his career, finishing third on the team in tackles (88 total), and his aggressive focus on the ball-carrier is critical to the Chiefs' ability to stop the run. One of the most memorable defensive plays of the year was Gay, in Week 14 at Denver, deflecting and then intercepting a Russell Wilson pass that he returned 47 yards for a touchdown, stiff-arming the quarterback in the process.

The Chiefs' personnel adjustments at corner have been subtle rather than drastic this year, with L'Jarius Sneed starting alongside Trent McDuffie, Kansas City's first pick in the 2022 NFL Draft and one of three corners the team selected.

Sneed, generally entrusted with covering an opponent's most potent receiving threat, finished second on the team with 108 tackles and tied for first with three interceptions. McDuffie is critical in the slot corner role and has produced a steady return. He and Sneed are interchangeable in their roles.

Later-round draft picks Jaylen Watson and Joshua Williams have rotated in at corner. Watson returned an interception of Chargers quarterback Justin Herbert 99 yards for a lead-changing touchdown in Week 2 and has picks of Trevor Lawrence and Joe Burrow in the playoffs.

Perhaps the most notable overhaul to the defense came at safety, where Justin Reid, Juan Thornhill, and rookie Bryan Cook were charged with replacing three-time Pro Bowler Tyrann Mathieu. Thornhill closed out the regular season with three interceptions, Reid was the team's fourth-leading tackler with 81 stops, and Cook sees significant playing time as the trio rotates to great effect.

SPECIAL TEAMS

Pacheco's 597 kickoff return yards were two shy of ranking in the top 10 in the NFL, giving the Chiefs a credible special teams

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS ALL-TIME PLAYOFF RESULTS

(19 wins, 21 losses)

Year	Round	Opponent	Score	W/L
1962	AFL Championship	at Houston Oilers	20-17 (2 OT)	W
(Played as Dallas Texans 1960-62; moved to Kansas City in 1963)				
1966	AFL Championship	at Buffalo	31-7	W
	Super Bowl I	**Green Bay**	**10-35**	**L**
1968	AFL Divisional	at Oakland Raiders	6-41	L
1969	AFL Divisional	at New York Jets	13-6	W
	AFL Championship	at Oakland Raiders	17-7	W
	Super Bowl IV	**Minnesota**	**23-7**	**W**
1971	AFC Divisional	Miami	24-27 (2 OT)	L
1986	AFC Wild Card	at New York Jets	15-35	L
1990	AFC Wild Card	at Miami	16-17	L
1991	AFC Wild Card	Los Angeles Raiders	10-6	W
	AFC Divisional	at Buffalo	14-37	L
1992	AFC Wild Card	at San Diego Chargers	0-17	L
1993	AFC Wild Card	Pittsburgh	27-24 (OT)	W
	AFC Divisional	at Houston Oilers	28-20	W
	AFC Championship	at Buffalo	13-30	L
1994	AFC Wild Card	at Miami	17-27	L
1995	AFC Divisional	Indianapolis	7-10	L
1997	AFC Divisional	Denver	10-14	L
2003	AFC Divisional	Indianapolis	31-38	L
2006	AFC Wild Card	at Indianapolis	8-23	L
2010	AFC Wild Card	Baltimore	7-30	L
2013	AFC Wild Card	at Indianapolis	44-45	L
2015	AFC Wild Card	at Houston	30-0	W
	AFC Divisional	at New England	20-27	L
2016	AFC Divisional	Pittsburgh	16-18	L
2017	AFC Wild Card	Tennessee	21-22	L
2018	AFC Divisional	Indianapolis	31-13	W
	AFC Championship	New England	31-37 (OT)	L
2019	AFC Divisional	Houston	51-31	W
	AFC Championship	Tennessee	35-24	W
	Super Bowl LIV	**San Francisco**	**31-20**	**W**
2020	AFC Divisional	Cleveland	22-17	W
	AFC Championship	Buffalo	38-24	W
	Super Bowl LV	**Tampa Bay**	**9-31**	**L**
2021	AFC Wild Card	Pittsburgh	42-21	W
	AFC Divisional	Buffalo	42-36 (OT)	W
	AFC Championship	Cincinnati	24-27 (OT)	L
2022	AFC Divisional	Jacksonville	27-20	W
	AFC Championship	Cincinnati	23-20	W

Peter Aiken/AP Images

Linebacker Nick Bolton joined the Chiefs in 2021 as a second-round draft pick out of Missouri and has been the team's leading tackler each of the past two seasons. In 2022, his 180 total tackles set a franchise record and ranked second in the NFL, and he added two sacks, two interceptions, and three passes defensed.

threat. Moore and Toney shared the role as the primary punt returners.

Tommy Townsend was among the least called upon, but most effective, punters in the NFL, earning his first Pro Bowl and All-Pro selections while ranking second in the NFL with a monster 50.4-yard overall average.

The normally automatic Harrison Butker had a few long-range misses during the regular season, finishing 18-of-24 on field goals, but his 62-yarder against Buffalo was a franchise record and the longest in the NFL this year. He also made a pair of 50-yard field goals in the playoff win over Jacksonville.

GAME PLAN

The Chiefs' formula for success against the Eagles begins with Mahomes and the deep roster of offensive talent at his disposal.

Along with the K.C. quarterback's elusiveness and famed improvised sidearm and jump passes, a balanced offensive approach that spreads things around could neutralize Philadelphia's attacking defense.

Using tight end Kelce in early possessions is a proven method to move the ball downfield in significant chunks and creates space and opportunity for the team's explosive receivers. The pass-catching threat of McKinnon out of the backfield and the relentless ground work of Pacheco makes the Chiefs' offense virtually impossible to predict.

Defensively, the late-season upswing needs to continue on Super Bowl Sunday if the Chiefs are to secure another title. This unit won't be asked to dominate, just create enough stops for Mahomes to work his magic.

If there's a note of caution, it is the Chiefs' negative-three turnover differential, which was a factor in the team having eight games in which the margin of victory was four points or fewer. Still, they went 5-3 in those contests.

"We've had a lot of close games this year where guys had to step up in big moments," Reid says. "Even though it doesn't make it easy as a fan watching it, I think it shows that we have guys who will compete at the end of the games and make the plays to win games."

Michael Preston *is a freelance writer and communications consultant based in Providence, R.I. He has worked 21 Super Bowls as a member of the NFL PR staff.*

AFC CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

CHIEFS 23, Bengals 20

Moments after Harrison Butker's 45-yard field goal cleared the uprights, the Chiefs officially cleared the biggest hurdle in their quest for AFC supremacy. The Chiefs and Bengals were battling for the fourth time in just over a year – for the second consecutive season in the AFC Championship Game – and another classic between the teams wasn't decided until Butker's last-second kick snapped a 20-20 tie, sending Kansas City to the Super Bowl for the third time in four seasons.

GEHA FIELD AT ARROWHEAD STADIUM
Kansas City, Mo. **Jan. 29, 2023**

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Cincinnati	0	6	7	7	20
Kansas City	3	10	7	3	23

1st Quarter

KC Butker 43 FG, 8:50

2nd Quarter

KC Butker 23 FG, 14:58
CIN McPherson 30 FG, 8:36
KC Kelce 14 pass from Mahomes (Butker kick), 3:53
CIN McPherson 23 FG, 0:00

3rd Quarter

CIN Higgins 27 pass from Burrow (McPherson kick), 9:54
KC Valdes-Scantling 19 pass from Mahomes (Butker kick), 4:15

4th Quarter

CIN Perine 2 run (McPherson kick), 13:30
KC Butker 45 FG, 0:03

While the Chiefs leaned on quarterback Patrick Mahomes' arm for most of the night, he also delivered with his legs with the game on the line. On a third-and-4 just past midfield, he scrambled to his right for a 5-yard gain, and a 15-yard unnecessary roughness penalty put the ball on the Cincinnati 27. Butker's field goal on the next play won the game.

Kansas City owned a 13-3 lead after a 14-yard Mahomes-to-Travis Kelce TD toss late in the second quarter. But the Bengals knotted things up, getting an Evan McPherson field goal on the final play of the first half and scoring again early in the third quarter on a 27-yard Joe Burrow touchdown pass to a leaping Tee Higgins.

The teams then traded TDs: Marquez Valdes-Scantling put the hosts back on top when he caught a 19-yard laser from Mahomes, and the Bengals' Samaje Perine evened things on a 2-yard run early in the fourth quarter. The game appeared headed for overtime for the second straight year before Chiefs defensive tackle Chris Jones ended a Bengals drive with a sack. Skyy Moore then returned the ensuing punt 29 yards to get Mahomes the ball at the Bengals 47 with 30 seconds to play.

Mahomes completed 29 of 43 passes for 326 yards and two touchdowns in the win. He now joins Tom Brady, Troy Aikman, Jim Kelly, John Elway, Roger Staubach, Bob Griese, and Fran Tarkenton as the only quarterbacks to reach three Super Bowls in four years. Valdes-Scantling led a thinned-out receiving corp with six catches for 116 yards, while cornerbacks Jaylen Watson and Joshua Williams snared interceptions for the victors.

Super Bowl LVII brings with it some topical subplots. Chiefs coach Andy Reid will face the Eagles, a team he coached for 14 seasons and took to Super Bowl XXXIX, while Pro Bowl brothers Jason (Eagles) and Travis (Chiefs) Kelce square off.

Reed Hoffmann/AP Images

Even though he was called upon to punt only 53 times during the regular season, Tommy Townsend has been an effective and important weapon for the Chiefs. He led the NFL in net punt average (45.6 yards) and was second in total average (50.4). Three of his four punts in the AFC title game pinned Cincinnati inside its own 20-yard line – two inside the 10.

CLARK HUNT CHAIRMAN AND CEO

CLARK HUNT has been involved in the leadership of the Kansas City Chiefs for nearly two decades and currently serves as the club's Chairman and CEO.

Hunt has been the driving force behind the resurgence of the Chiefs, transforming the iconic franchise into one of the most successful teams in the NFL. The Chiefs have earned eight AFC West Division championships and 10 playoff appearances since Hunt took over as CEO in 2010.

Last month, Hunt hoisted the award that bears his father's name – the Lamar Hunt Trophy – for the third time in four years, as the Chiefs once again became AFC champions. The franchise is making its fifth Super Bowl appearance.

In January 2013, Hunt modified the leadership structure of the organization, announcing that for the first time in club history, the head coach, the general manager, and the team president would all report directly to the Chairman and CEO. Hunt hired head coach Andy Reid in 2013, and in 10 seasons under Reid, the Chiefs have won 117 regular-season games, the most wins in the NFL during that span.

Hunt extended the contracts of both Reid and general manager Brett Veach during the 2020 season, solidifying the leadership of the club's football operation for years to come.

In addition to the on-field resurgence of the team, Hunt is a leading voice among NFL owners. In 2019, he was named chairman of the influential NFL Finance Committee after serving as a member for seven years. He also serves on the Personal Conduct Committee and the Management Council Executive Committee (CEC), where he was instrumental in securing the NFL's last two collective bargaining agreements in 2011 and 2020.

Hunt is a member and former chairman of the NFL International Committee and an advocate for expanding the league's international efforts. The league significantly grew its global footprint under his chairmanship (2011-18). Since 2011, the league has hosted 37 regular-season games internationally and recently announced International Home Marketing Area rights for participating teams, further expanding the NFL brand. The Chiefs will play their third-ever regular-season international game during the 2023 season in Germany.

Hunt's leadership has elevated Kansas City as a sports destination. The city is preparing to host the 2023 NFL Draft and the 2026 FIFA World Cup with GEHA Field at Arrowhead Stadium serving as a match site. This feat comes after hosting five consecutive AFC Championship Games.

Hunt graduated first in his class at Southern Methodist University in 1987, earning a degree in business administration with a concentration in finance. He received the SMU Distinguished Alumni Award in 2020, and he currently serves on the SMU Board of Trustees.

He and his wife, Tavia, are actively involved in numerous philanthropic initiatives in both Kansas City and Dallas. One of the Hunt family's lasting legacies is the Chiefs Charity Game, which has raised more than $15.1 million for local youth-focused charities since its inception in 1985.

The Hunts have three children: Gracie, Knobel, and Ava.

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS TEAM OFFICIALS

Clark Hunt
Chairman and CEO

Mark Donovan
President

Brett Veach
General Manager

Mike Borgonzi
Assistant General Manager

Brandt Tilis
Vice President of Football Operations

Chris Shea
Vice President of Football Operations/Team Counsel

Mike Bradway
Senior Director of Player Personnel

Ryne Nutt
Director of Player Personnel/College Scouting

Tim Terry
Director of Player Personnel/Pro Scouting

Rick Burkholder
Vice President of Sports Medicine and Performance

Dan Crumb
Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer

Lara Krug
Executive Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer

Ted Crews
Executive Vice President of Communications

Matt Kenny
Executive Vice President of Arrowhead Operations and Events

Tyler Kirby
Executive Vice President of Business Development

Kirsten Krug
Executive Vice President of Administration

Robert Alberino Jr.
Vice President of Content and Production

Nick Capo
Vice President of Event Operations

Brian Dunn
Vice President of Accounting and Controller

Brad Gee
Vice President of Football Communications

Brandon Hamilton
Vice President of Stadium Operations and Facilities

Kevin Higgins
Vice President of Information Technology/CISO

Kimberly Hobbs
Vice President of Corporate Partnerships and Premium Sales

Neale Hood
Vice President of Corporate Partnership Sales

Jayne Martin
Vice President of Fan Experience

Jeffrey Miller
Vice President of Security

Michael Ragsdale
Vice President of Finance, Strategy, and Analytics

Anne Scharf
Vice President of Community Impact and Civic Affairs

Jeremy Slavens
Vice President of Arrowhead Events

Dr. Shaun Tyrance
Vice President of Player Services and Assessment

Pat Brazil
Director of Video Operations

Cydney Glaze
Director of Communications and Administration

Brian Shafar
Senior Director of Team Security

Luke Shanno
Senior Director of Corporate Communications

Mitch Reynolds
Director of Team Operations

Ramzee Robinson
Director of Player Engagement

Allen Wright
Equipment Director

Kellen Begnoche
Director of Service and Activation

Chuck Castellano
Director of Community Outreach

Glenn Connelly
Director of Production

Colby Harrison
Director of Safety and Event Security

Stephanie Judah
Director of Chiefs Cheerleaders

Anthony Matthies
Senior Director of Premium Sales

Rocco Mazzella
Senior Director of Facility Operations

Megan McMullen
Director of Client Services

Justin Sauser
Senior Director of Ticket Sales and Operations

Gary Spani
Director of Community Engagement

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ANDY REID Head Coach

Chiefs head coach Andy Reid is in his 31st NFL season, 24th as a head coach, and 10th with the Chiefs. Under Reid, Kansas City has made the playoffs nine times and has won a franchise-record seven straight AFC West titles. Reid's .722 regular-season win percentage is the highest mark in franchise history.

In 2022, the Chiefs went 14-3, going 6-0 against AFC West opponents. After starting the 2021 season 3-4, the Chiefs went on an eight-game win streak and finished with at least 12 wins for the fourth consecutive year. In 2020, Kansas City posted a franchise-best 14-2 record and appeared in Super Bowl LV, falling to the Buccaneers, 31-9. In 2019, Kansas City went 12-4 and won its first Super Bowl title in 50 years by rallying to defeat the 49ers, 31-20, in Super Bowl LIV.

Prior to joining the Chiefs, Reid led the Philadelphia Eagles to a 130-93-1 (.583) regular-season record and five trips to the NFC Championship Game, as well as an appearance in Super Bowl XXXIX. Reid's 21 postseason wins are the second-most in NFL history.

A tackle/guard at Brigham Young University from 1979-81, Reid served as a graduate assistant at BYU in 1982 and coached at several colleges before moving on to the NFL.

ASSISTANT COACHES

Dave Toub.....Assistant Head Coach/Special Teams Coordinator
Eric Bieniemy.....Offensive Coordinator
Steve Spagnuolo.....Defensive Coordinator
Joe Bleymaier.....Wide Receivers
Terry Bradden.....Assistant Defensive Line
Greg Carbin.....Assistant Strength and Conditioning
Joe Cullen.....Defensive Line
Donald D'Alesio.....Safeties
Brendan Daly.....Linebackers
Porter Ellett.....Offensive Quality Control
Connor Embree.....Offensive Quality Control
Ken Flajole.....Outside Linebackers
Mike Frazier.....Statistical Analysis Coordinator
David Girardi.....Pass Game Analyst/Assistant Quarterbacks
Andy Heck.....Offensive Line
Andy Hill.....Assistant Special Teams
Tyler Judkins.....Assistant Strength and Conditioning
Greg Lewis.....Running Backs
Corey Matthael.....Assistant Offensive Line
Tom Melvin.....Tight Ends
Dave Merritt.....Defensive Backs
Matt Nagy.....Senior Offensive Assistant/Quarterbacks
Ryan Reynolds.....Assistant Strength and Conditioning/Director of Sports Science
Marc Richards.....Football Research Analyst
Barry Rubin.....Head Strength and Conditioning
Alex Whittingham.....Defensive Quality Control
Dan Williams.....Offensive Assistant
Rod Wilson.....Defensive Assistant

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS ALPHABETICAL ROSTER

NO	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	BIRTH DATE	NFL EXP	COLLEGE	HOW ACQUIRED
73	Allegretti, Nick	G	6-4	310	4/21/96	4	Illinois	D7 '19
81	Bell, Blake	TE	6-6	252	8/7/91	8	Oklahoma	FA '21
32	Bolton, Nick	LB	5-11	237	3/10/00	2	Missouri	D2a '21
57	Brown, Orlando	T	6-8	340	5/2/96	5	Oklahoma	T (Bal.) '21
12	Buechele, Shane	QB	6-0	210	1/8/98	2	Southern Methodist	CFA '21
45	Burton, Michael	FB	5-11	242	2/1/92	8	Rutgers	FA '21
26	Bush, Deon	S	6-0	200	8/14/93	7	Miami	FA '22
7	Butker, Harrison	K	6-4	199	7/14/95	6	Georgia Tech	FA '17
54	Chenal, Leo	LB	6-3	250	10/26/00	R	Wisconsin	D3 '22
55	Clark, Frank	DE	6-3	272	6/17/93	8	Michigan	T (Sea.) '19
43	Cochrane, Jack	LB	6-3	236	2/9/99	R	South Dakota	CFA '22
6	Cook, Bryan	S	6-1	206	9/7/99	R	Cincinnati	D2b '22
51	Danna, Mike	DE	6-2	257	12/1/97	3	Michigan	D5 '20
8	Dunlap, Carlos	DE	6-6	285	2/28/89	13	Florida	FA '22
88	Fortson, Jody	TE	6-4	226	12/7/95	2	Valdosta State	CFA '19
50	Gay, Willie	LB	6-1	243	2/15/98	3	Mississippi State	D2 '20
83	Gray, Noah	TE	6-3	240	4/30/99	2	Duke	D5a '21
17	Hardman, Mecole	WR	5-10	187	3/12/98	4	Georgia	D2a '19
47	Harris, Darius	LB	6-2	232	1/17/96	3	Middle Tennessee State	CFA '19
4	Henne, Chad	QB	6-3	230	7/2/85	15	Michigan	UFA '18
94	Herring, Malik	DE	6-3	275	11/9/97	2	Georgia	CFA '21
52	Humphrey, Creed	C	6-4	302	6/28/99	2	Oklahoma	D2b '21
13	Johnson, Nazeeh	S	5-10	199	7/17/98	R	Marshall	D7c '22
95	Jones, Chris	DT	6-6	310	7/3/94	7	Mississippi State	D2 '16
2	Jones, Ronald	RB	5-11	205	8/3/97	5	Southern California	FA '22
59	Kaindoh, Joshua	DE	6-6	260	12/27/98	2	Florida State	D4 '21
56	Karlaftis, George	DE	6-4	263	4/3/01	R	Purdue	D1b '22
87	Kelce, Travis	TE	6-5	250	10/5/89	10	Cincinnati	D3a '13
75	Kinnard, Darian	T	6-5	322	12/29/99	R	Kentucky	D5 '22
15	Mahomes, Patrick	QB	6-2	225	9/17/95	6	Texas Tech	D1 '17
21	McDuffie, Trent	CB	5-11	193	9/13/00	R	Washington	D1a '22
1	McKinnon, Jerick	RB	5-9	209	5/3/92	9	Georgia Southern	FA '21
24	Moore, Skyy	WR	5-10	195	9/10/00	R	Western Michigan	D2a '22
67	Niang, Lucas	T	6-6	315	8/19/98	2	Texas Christian	D3 '20
91	Nnadi, Derrick	DT	6-1	317	5/9/96	5	Florida State	D3a '18
10	Pacheco, Isiah	RB	5-10	216	3/2/99	R	Rutgers	D7b '22
20	Reid, Justin	S	6-1	207	2/15/97	5	Stanford	FA '22
99	Saunders, Khalen	DT	6-0	324	8/9/96	4	Western Illinois	D3 '19
65	Smith, Trey	G	6-6	321	6/16/99	2	Tennessee	D6 '21
9	Smith-Schuster, JuJu	WR	6-1	215	11/22/96	6	Southern California	FA '22
38	Sneed, L'Jarius	CB	6-1	192	1/21/97	3	Louisiana Tech	D4 '20
22	Thornhill, Juan	S	6-0	205	10/19/95	4	Virginia	D2b '19
62	Thuney, Joe	G	6-5	304	11/18/92	7	North Carolina State	FA '21
19	Toney, Kadarius	WR	6-0	193	1/27/99	2	Florida	T (NYG) '22
5	Townsend, Tommy	P	6-1	191	11/12/96	3	Florida	CFA '20
11	Valdes-Scantling, Marquez	WR	6-4	206	10/10/94	5	South Florida	FA '22
70	Wanogho, Prince Tega	T	6-5	308	11/22/97	2	Auburn	FA '20
35	Watson, Jaylen	CB	6-2	197	9/17/98	R	Washington State	D7a '22
84	Watson, Justin	WR	6-2	215	4/4/96	5	Pennsylvania	FA '22
66	Williams, Brandon	DT	6-1	336	2/21/89	10	Missouri Southern	FA '22
23	Williams, Joshua	CB	6-3	193	10/17/99	R	Fayetteville State	D4 '22
41	Winchester, James	LS	6-3	209	8/6/89	8	Oklahoma	FA '15
77	Wylie, Andrew	T	6-5	304	8/19/94	5	Eastern Michigan	FA '17

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS

Nick Allegretti (73)
Guard

Blake Bell (81)
Tight End

Nick Bolton (32)
Linebacker

Orlando Brown (57)
Tackle

Shane Buechele (12)
Quarterback

Michael Burton (45)
Fullback

Deon Bush (26)
Safety

Harrison Butker (7)
Kicker

Leo Chenal (54)
Linebacker

Frank Clark (55)
Defensive End

Jack Cochrane (43)
Linebacker

Bryan Cook (6)
Safety

Mike Danna (51)
Defensive End

Carlos Dunlap (8)
Defensive End

Jody Fortson (88)
Tight End

Willie Gay (50)
Linebacker

Noah Gray (83)
Tight End

Mecole Hardman (17)
Wide Receiver

Darius Harris (47)
Linebacker

Chad Henne (4)
Quarterback

Malik Herring (94)
Defensive End

Creed Humphrey (52)
Center

Nazeeh Johnson (13)
Safety

Chris Jones (95)
Defensive Tackle

Ronald Jones (2)
Running Back

Joshua Kaindoh (59)
Defensive End

George Karlaftis (56)
Defensive End

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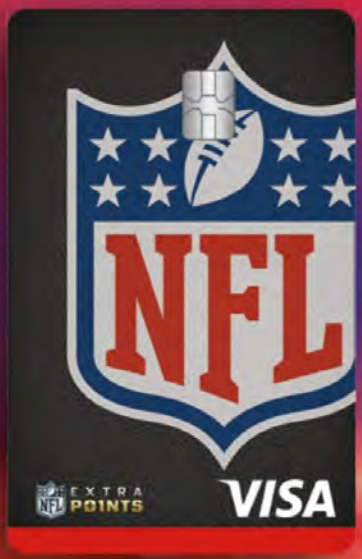

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KANSAS CITY CHIEFS

Travis Kelce (87)
Tight End

Darian Kinnard (75)
Tackle

Patrick Mahomes (15)
Quarterback

Trent McDuffie (21)
Cornerback

Jerick McKinnon (1)
Running Back

Skyy Moore (24)
Wide Receiver

Lucas Niang (67)
Tackle

Derrick Nnadi (91)
Defensive Tackle

Isiah Pacheco (10)
Running Back

Justin Reid (20)
Safety

Khalen Saunders (99)
Defensive Tackle

Trey Smith (65)
Guard

JuJu Smith-Schuster (9)
Wide Receiver

L'Jarius Sneed (38)
Cornerback

Juan Thornhill (22)
Safety

Joe Thuney (62)
Guard

Kadarius Toney (19)
Wide Receiver

Tommy Townsend (5)
Punter

Marquez Valdes-Scantling (11)
Wide Receiver

Prince Tega Wanogho (70)
Tackle

Jaylen Watson (35)
Cornerback

Justin Watson (84)
Wide Receiver

Brandon Williams (66)
Defensive Tackle

Joshua Williams (23)
Cornerback

James Winchester (41)
Long Snapper

Andrew Wylie (77)
Tackle

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A WINDOW TO ARIZONA

68 HOST COMMITTEE WELCOME
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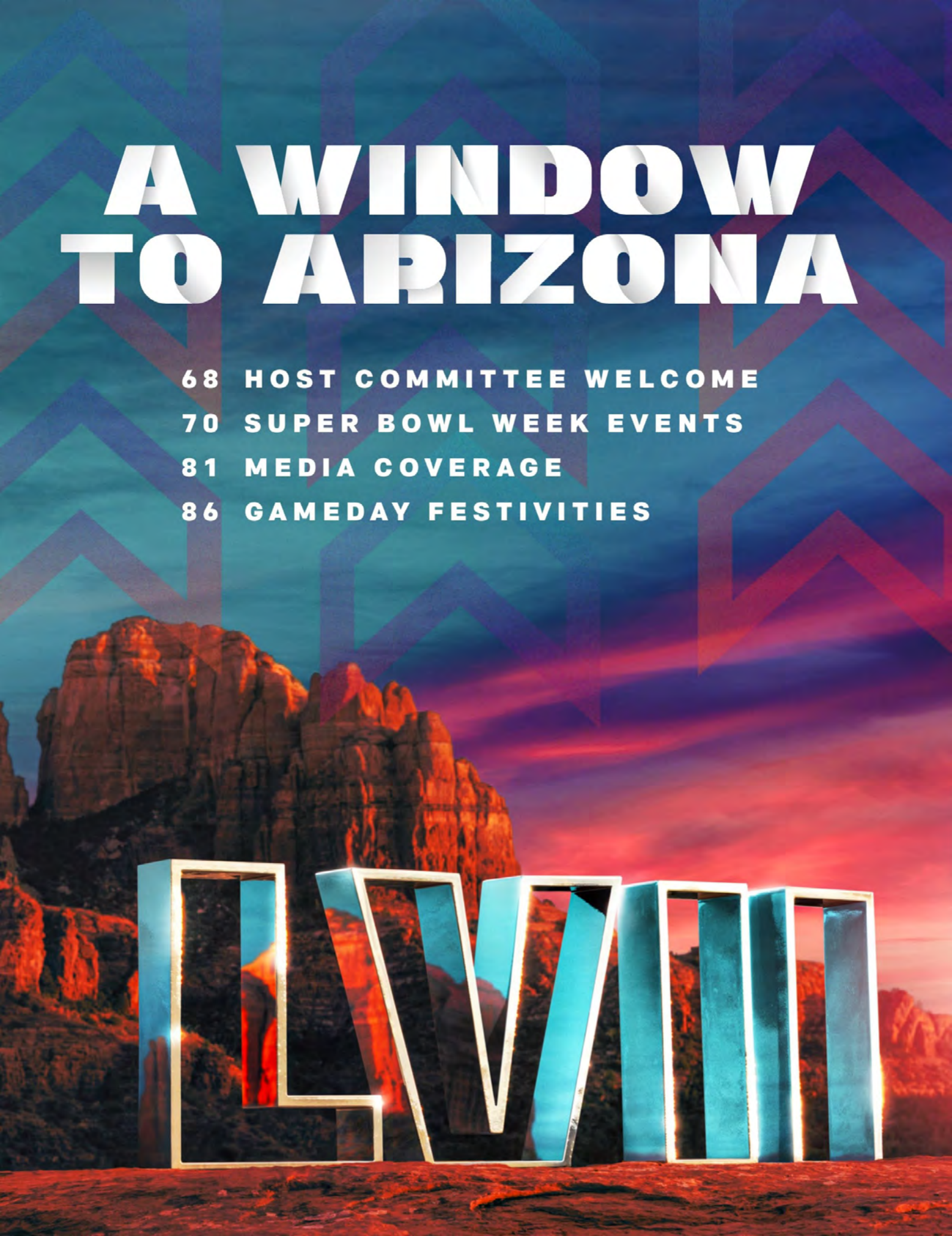
81 MEDIA COVERAGE
86 GAMEDAY FESTIVITIES



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2023 EQE 350 Sedan shown in Graphite Grey metallic paint with optional equipment. ©2023 Mercedes-Benz USA, LLC

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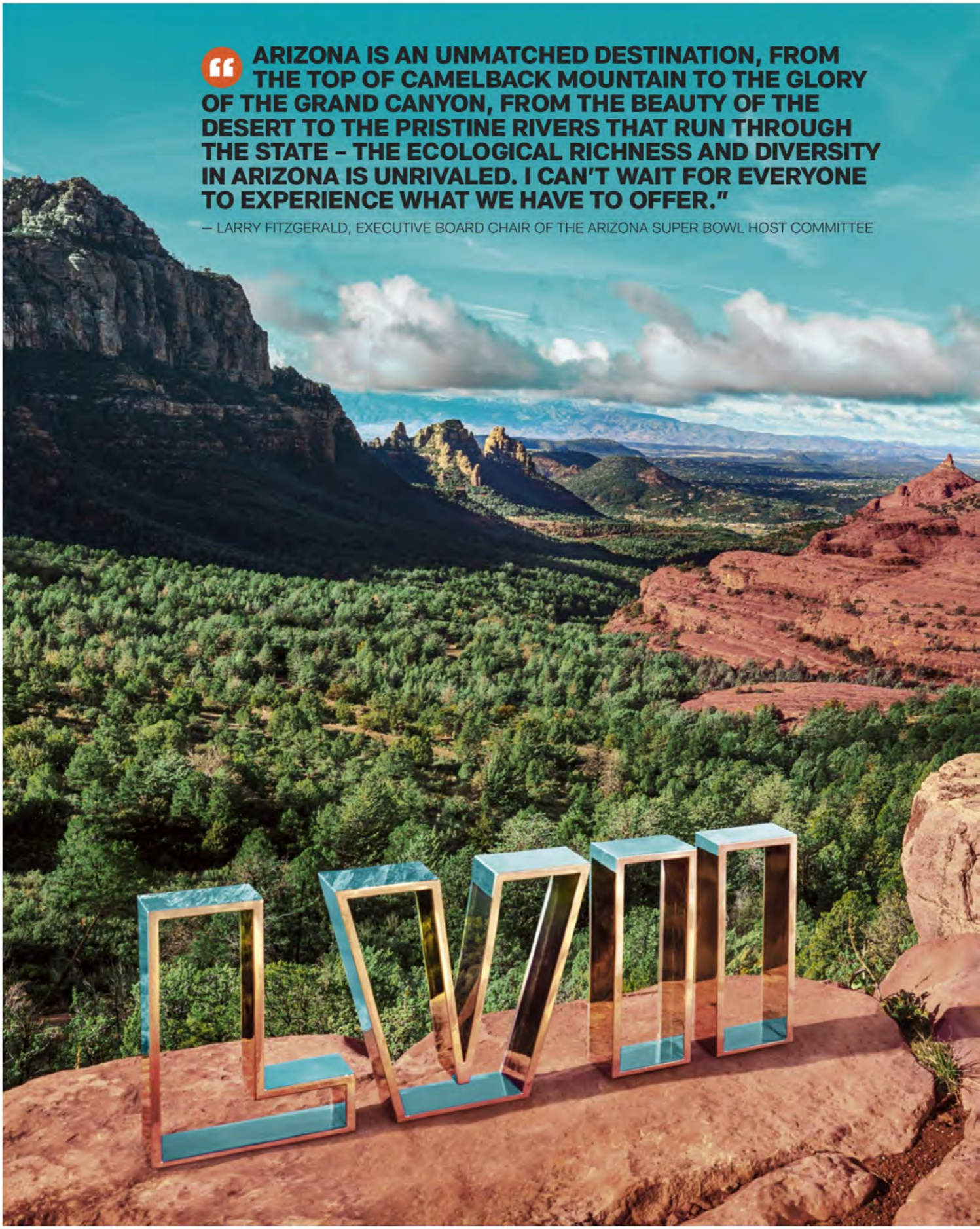
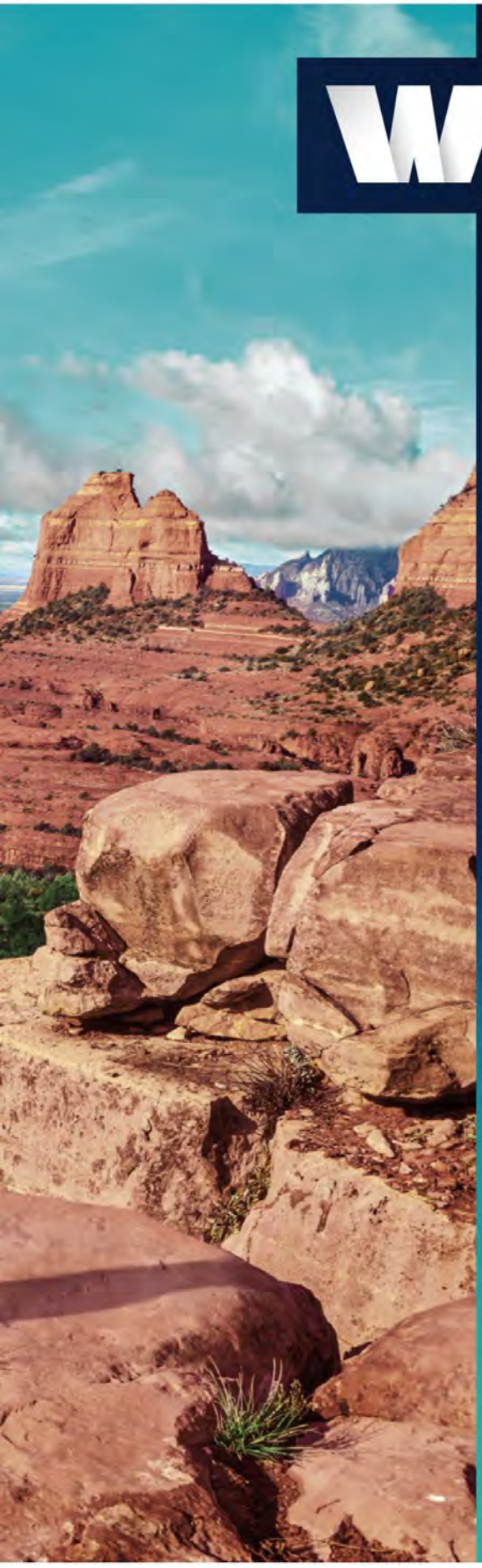


"ARIZONA IS AN UNMATCHED DESTINATION, FROM THE TOP OF CAMELBACK MOUNTAIN TO THE GLORY OF THE GRAND CANYON, FROM THE BEAUTY OF THE DESERT TO THE PRISTINE RIVERS THAT RUN THROUGH THE STATE – THE ECOLOGICAL RICHNESS AND DIVERSITY IN ARIZONA IS UNRIVALED. I CAN'T WAIT FOR EVERYONE TO EXPERIENCE WHAT WE HAVE TO OFFER."

– LARRY FITZGERALD, EXECUTIVE BOARD CHAIR OF THE ARIZONA SUPER BOWL HOST COMMITTEE



WELCOME TO AZ SUPER BOWL LVII

Dear Super Bowl LVII Guests,

On behalf of the Arizona Super Bowl Host Committee, welcome to Arizona and the Valley of the Sun for Super Bowl LVII!

We are honored to host the Super Bowl for the fourth time. With each Super Bowl, our goal is to elevate the experience for locals and visitors. From the free fan festival, Super Bowl Experience presented by Lowe's at Hance Park in downtown Phoenix, to Scottsdale at the Historic Old Town ESPN Main Street Tailgate, and Glendale for the game, we invite you to take in the excitement and events throughout the entire region.

Since hosting Super Bowl XLIX in 2015, Arizona's economy and population have skyrocketed, adding more than 500,000 new jobs and over 580,000 new residents. Advanced sectors related to manufacturing and technology have flourished, while the state has invested more than $1 billion in infrastructure upgrades, including more than 28 miles of freeway and light rail expansions.

Beyond the natural beauty and limitless outdoor recreation, Arizona is home to world-class resorts, award-winning restaurants, and more than 350 golf courses. We hope you explore and enjoy the culture and diversity of our state.

Hosting Super Bowl LVII is possible with the strong partnerships of our NFL colleagues and Arizona business, tribal, and civic leaders. Thank you for driving the far-reaching economic and philanthropic legacy of Super Bowl LVII. Plus, a huge thank you to every TEAM AZ volunteer providing a warm welcome to the devoted fans who traveled from around the world.

Thank you for being here. We hope you enjoy the game. You are always welcome in Arizona.

With gratitude,

Jay Parry
President & CEO
Arizona Super Bowl Host Committee

ARIZONA SUPER BOWL LVII HOST COMMITTEE 2023

Super Bowl Experience Presented by Lowe's

AT PHOENIX CONVENTION CENTER

SUPER BOWL EXPERIENCE PRESENTED BY LOWE'S – the NFL's interactive football theme park – returns to Arizona for Super Bowl LVII on Saturday, Feb. 4 – Sunday, Feb. 5, and from Thursday, Feb. 9 – Saturday, Feb. 11, at the Phoenix Convention Center.

Super Bowl Experience presented by Lowe's offers fans the opportunity to collect autographs from current NFL players and Legends, shop for merchandise from NFL Shop presented by Visa, and participate in new and enhanced interactive games and youth football clinics. Super Bowl Experience also features photo opportunities with the Vince Lombardi Trophy, a 40-yard dash against NFL players on LED screens, and a Super Bowl display showcasing all 56 Super Bowl rings. It's the ultimate Super Bowl Week event with fun for all ages.

The NFL OnePass app is required for entry into Super Bowl Experience presented by Lowe's. For more information and a complete schedule of events for Super Bowl Experience, visit **SuperBowl.com** and download the NFL OnePass app. Fans who download and register for the NFL OnePass app will also be entered for a chance to win a pair of tickets to Super Bowl LVII.

NFL SHOP PRESENTED BY VISA SUPER BOWL LVII LOCATIONS

NFL SHOP presented by VISA

MAIN STORE

Location: Super Bowl Experience Presented by Lowe's – Phoenix Convention Center
Dates/Hours: Feb. 4 & 11 (10 a.m. - 10 p.m.); Feb. 5 (10 a.m. - 8 p.m.); Feb. 6-8 (10 a.m. - 6 p.m.); Feb. 9-10 (12 p.m. - 10 p.m.)

The main store will feature core Super Bowl products as well as specialty items, including customizable socks and tees. The assortment also will include all 32 NFL teams. The store is open to the public; a Super Bowl Experience ticket IS NOT required for access or entry.

OTHER LOCATIONS / ON-LINE STORES

Other NFL Shop presented by Visa locations include Super Bowl Experience Presented by Lowe's at Hance Park, State Farm Stadium on gameday, and nearly two dozen satellite stores. To shop Super Bowl merchandise online, go to **NFLshop.com/super-bowl-lvii**.

Adam Hunger/AP Images

SUPER BOWL EXPERIENCE INFORMATION

HOURS OF OPERATION

Saturday, Feb. 4	10 a.m. – 10 p.m.
Sunday, Feb. 5	10 a.m. – 8 p.m.
Feb. 6 – Feb. 8	CLOSED
Thursday, Feb. 9	3 p.m. – 10 p.m.
Friday, Feb. 10	3 p.m. – 10 p.m.
Saturday, Feb. 11	10 a.m. – 10 p.m.
Feb. 12	CLOSED

TICKETS

Super Bowl Experience tickets are on sale at **SuperBowl.com/ExperienceTickets**. Fans can also purchase tickets at the Phoenix Convention Center, located at 100 North Third St. between Washington and Monroe streets.

Date	Adult	Age 12 & Under
Saturday, Feb. 4	$20	Free
Sunday, Feb. 5	$20	Free
Thursday, Feb. 9	$40	Free
Friday, Feb. 10	$40	Free
Saturday, Feb. 11	$40	Free

SBXTRA

SBXTRA tickets ($60) include a general ticket to Super Bowl Experience presented by Lowe's, which is required for entry into the event. SBXTRA allows fans priority access to their favorite Super Bowl Experience attractions ALL DAY beginning at the time slot purchased. Look for the SBXTRA sign at the following attractions:

- Autograph Stage (one autograph for each SBXTRA purchase)
- Vince Lombardi Trophy (one photo for each SBXTRA purchase)
- Interactive Games (unlimited access)

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For over 50 years, Penske has kept fleets, supply chains and businesses moving forward. From uptown to cross country and any direction you need, our transportation and logistics solutions have you covered. Because when your business is on the line, you have everything to lose but even more to gain.
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Super Bowl Experience Presented by Lowe's

AT HANCE PARK

The NFL, in partnership with the Arizona Super Bowl Host Committee, is taking over downtown Phoenix with a second interactive experience – Super Bowl Experience presented by Lowe's at Hance Park (67 West Culver Street, Phoenix) – from Thursday, Feb. 9, through Sunday, Feb. 12.

This free multi-day outdoor festival features live music and entertainment, local cuisine, and multicultural celebrations.

Announced performers for the Verizon Stage include Arizona-grown rock band Jimmy Eat World on Feb. 9 and award-winning country music artist Lee Brice on Feb. 10.

Viewing space for the concerts is based on availability on a first-come, first-served basis. Along with live entertainment and games, fans can enjoy cuisine catering to every palette and local and domestic beer from Hensley Beverage Company. Fans are encouraged to download the OnePass App before arriving.

The four-day festival concludes in style with the first-ever NFL-sanctioned Super Bowl Watch Party (11 a.m. MT) on Super Bowl Sunday.

For the latest information on the events at Hance Park and other Super Bowl LVII celebrations, visit **SuperBowl.com/EventInfo**.

Jimmy Eat World

Getty Images

Lee Brice

AP Images

NFL SPOTLIGHTS CHICANA AND NATIVE AMERICAN ARTIST LUCINDA "LA MORENA" HINOJOS

The NFL has partnered with artist Lucinda "La Morena" Hinojos, the first Chicana, Native American, artist to work with the league on Super Bowl theme art. She is the marquee artist of Super Bowl LVII, designing an elaborate, deeply meaningful piece being featured on an array of design activations for Super Bowl LVII. The artwork created by Hinojos is being showcased around the state, as well as displayed on the Super Bowl gameday tickets and game program.

One of Hinojos' pieces is a massive 9,500-square-foot mural painted in collaboration with Indige Design Collab of Cahokia Socialtech and Artspace, the Indigenous-led platform for creative peacekeeping, and fellow Native American artists Randy Barton, Anitra "Yukue" Molina, and Carrie "CC" Curley. Painted on the Monarch Theatre (122 East Washington Street, Phoenix), the artwork is a symbol of Indigenous collaboration and emphasizes the narrative of community and unity.

NFL partner Wilson is also collaborating with Hinojos on a football design. The ball is inspired by the progression of Lucinda's own personal artistic journey and how important heritage and community are to her. The ball will be available for purchase on Wilson.com and at Super Bowl Experience at Phoenix Convention Center.

SUPER BOWL EXPERIENCE

HOURS OF OPERATION

Thursday, Feb. 9	2 p.m. – 10 p.m.
Friday, Feb. 10	2 p.m. – 10 p.m.
Saturday, Feb. 11	10 a.m. – 10 p.m.
Sunday, Feb. 12	11 a.m. - 9 p.m.

WEEK OF OUTREACH

Super Bowl LVII will impact the Arizona community with charitable activities and community outreach events that will enrich the community and provide lasting legacies long after the game is played. The community events are taking place throughout Super Bowl Week leading up to the game. For more information on the NFL's initiatives, visit **NFL.com/community**.

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Super Bowl Opening Night marks the beginning of a week-long series of events leading up to Super Bowl LVII.

Jeff Dean/AP Images

Rams wide receiver Cooper Kupp accepts the 2021 AP Offensive Player of the Year Award at last year's *NFL Honors* show.

Mark J. Terrill/AP Images

Dave Matthews Band is headlining one of the shows of the Super Bowl LVII Music Fest.

Paul R. Gilbert/AP Images

TV EVENTS

SUPER BOWL OPENING NIGHT

Presented by Fast Twitch

Feb. 6 • Footprint Center • 6 p.m. (MT) / 8 p.m. (ET)

Super Bowl Opening Night presented by Fast Twitch marks the kickoff of Super Bowl LVII activities. Media members will interview the Super Bowl players and coaches for the first time during their sole public appearance before taking the field on Super Bowl Sunday. The event will also feature live entertainment, special appearances and autographs by NFL Legends, team mascots, and fan photo opportunities. Tickets for Super Bowl Opening Night are $20 and can be purchased at **SuperBowl.com/OpeningNight**. NFL Network coverage is being hosted by Rich Eisen, with Michael Irvin live at Footprint Center interviewing all the main players.

NFL HONORS

Presented by Invisalign

Feb. 9 • Symphony Hall • 7 p.m. (MT) / 9 p.m. (ET)

Emmy- and GRAMMY®-Award winning artist Kelly Clarkson will host *NFL Honors presented by Invisalign* on Thursday, Feb. 9, at Symphony Hall in Phoenix. The prime-time awards special that recognizes the NFL's best players, performances, and plays from the 2022 season will air live on NBC, NFL Network, and Peacock. *NFL Honors* debuted in 2012 and features the announcement of such awards as the Associated Press' annual accolades, the prestigious Walter Payton NFL Man of the Year presented by Nationwide, and the newest Pro Football Hall of Fame class delivered with Uber Eats.

LIVE SHOWS

SUPER BOWL LVII MUSIC FEST

Feb. 9-11 • Footprint Center • 7 p.m. (MT)

The fourth annual Super Bowl Music Fest, a cornerstone of the Super Bowl fan experience, takes place across three days at the Footprint Center. Since its inception, the festival has redefined and enhanced the experience of music at one of the biggest sporting events in the world with exciting talent and cross-genre collaborations. This year's lineup features: Feb. 9 – Paramore and Bleachers; Feb. 10 – Dave Matthews Band with special guest DJ Pee .Wee, aka Anderson .Paak all vinyl set; Feb. 11 – Imagine Dragons and Kane Brown. For more info, including ticket availability, go to **SuperBowlmusicfest.com**.

SUPER BOWL SOULFUL CELEBRATION: AN EVENING OF INSPIRATION & CULTURE

Feb. 8 • Mesa Arts Center • 7:30 p.m. (MT)

The Super Bowl Soulful Celebration is the only inspirational music event sanctioned by the NFL for Super Bowl Weekend. This uplifting concert brings NFL players and award-winning musical artists together on one stage for an evening of joy and praise at the biggest game on earth. For a list of performers and for tickets, visit **SuperBowlgospel.com**.

BOTOX® onabotulinumtoxinA injection

CHRONIC MIGRAINE

BOTOX® for Chronic Migraine?

BOTOX® prevents headaches in adults with Chronic Migraine: 15 or more headache days a month, each lasting 4 hours or more. BOTOX® is not approved for 14 or fewer headache days a month.

BOTOX® prevents, on average, 8 to 9 headache days and migraine/probable migraine days a month (vs 6 to 7 for placebo).

does it work?

what about cost?

Questions about BOTOX®? It's time to ask your doctor.

INDICATION

BOTOX® (onabotulinumtoxinA) is a prescription medicine that is injected into muscles and used to prevent headaches in adults with chronic migraine who have 15 or more days each month with headache lasting 4 or more hours each day in people 18 years and older.

It is not known whether BOTOX is safe and effective to prevent headaches in patients with migraine who have 14 or fewer headache days each month (episodic migraine).

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

BOTOX may cause serious side effects that can be life threatening. Get medical help right away if you have any of these problems any time (hours to weeks) after injection of BOTOX:

- **Problems swallowing, speaking, or breathing,** due to weakening of associated muscles, can be severe and result in loss of life. You are at the highest risk if these problems are preexisting before injection. Swallowing problems may last for several months.
- **Spread of toxin effects.** The effect of botulinum toxin may affect areas away from the injection site and cause serious symptoms, including loss of strength and all-over muscle weakness; double vision; blurred vision; drooping eyelids; hoarseness or change or loss of voice; trouble saying words clearly; loss of bladder control; trouble breathing; and trouble swallowing.

There has not been a confirmed serious case of spread of toxin effect away from the injection site when BOTOX has been used at the recommended dose to treat chronic migraine.

BOTOX may cause loss of strength or general muscle weakness, vision problems, or dizziness within hours to weeks of receiving BOTOX. **If this happens, do not drive a car, operate machinery, or do other dangerous activities.**

Do not receive BOTOX if you are allergic to any of the ingredients in BOTOX (see Medication Guide for ingredients); had an allergic reaction to any other botulinum toxin product such as Myobloc® (rimabotulinumtoxinB), Dysport® (abobotulinumtoxinA), or Xeomin® (incobotulinumtoxinA); have a skin infection at the planned injection site.

The dose of BOTOX is not the same as, or comparable to, another botulinum toxin product.

Serious and/or immediate allergic reactions have been reported, including itching; rash; red, itchy welts; wheezing; asthma symptoms; dizziness; or feeling faint. Get medical help right away if you experience symptoms; further injection of BOTOX should be discontinued.

in a survey,

97%

of current BOTOX® users say they plan to keep using it!*(n=71)

and

92%

of current BOTOX® users said they wish they'd talked to a doctor and started sooner!*(n=71)

BOTOX® prevents headaches in adults with Chronic Migraine before they even start.

It's about 10 minutes of treatment once every 3 months.†

It's time to talk to your doctor about BOTOX® and ask if samples are available.

By participating in the BOTOX® Savings Program, you acknowledge and agree to the full Terms & Conditions set out at BOTOXSavingsProgram.com/TermsandConditions. Patients enrolled in Medicare, Medicaid, TRICARE, or any other government-reimbursed healthcare program are not eligible. Other restrictions and maximum limits apply.

you may pay

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BOTOX® onabotulinumtoxinA injection

CHRONIC MIGRAINE

BOTOXChronicMigraine.com

*2020 BOTOX® Chronic Migraine Patient Market Research BOTOX® Current Users. †BOTOX® injections are given by your doctor. ‡See Privacy & Terms: http://bit.ly/2RvxiWr. Message & data rates may apply. Message frequency may vary. Text HELP for help or STOP to end.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION (continued)

Tell your doctor about all your muscle or nerve conditions, such as ALS or Lou Gehrig's disease, myasthenia gravis, or Lambert-Eaton syndrome, as you may be at increased risk of serious side effects, including difficulty swallowing and difficulty breathing from typical doses of BOTOX.

Tell your doctor about all your medical conditions, including if you have or have had bleeding problems; have plans to have surgery; had surgery on your face; have weakness of forehead muscles, trouble raising your eyebrows, drooping eyelids, and any other abnormal facial change; are pregnant or plan to become pregnant (it is not known if BOTOX can harm your unborn baby); are breastfeeding or plan to (it is not known if BOTOX passes into breast milk).

Tell your doctor about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Using BOTOX with certain other medicines may cause serious side effects. **Do not start any new medicines until you have told your doctor that you have received BOTOX in the past.**

Tell your doctor if you received any other botulinum toxin product in the last 4 months; have received injections of botulinum toxin such as Myobloc®, Dysport®, or Xeomin® in the past (tell your doctor exactly which product you received); have recently received an antibiotic by injection; take muscle relaxants; take an allergy or cold medicine; take a sleep medicine; take aspirin-like products or blood thinners.

Other side effects of BOTOX include dry mouth; discomfort or pain at the injection site; tiredness; headache; neck pain; eye problems such as double vision, blurred vision, decreased eyesight, drooping eyelids, swelling of your eyelids, and dry eyes; drooping eyebrows; and upper respiratory tract infection.

For more information, refer to the Medication Guide or talk with your doctor.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Please see accompanying Summary of Information about BOTOX®.

If you are having difficulty paying for your medicine, AbbVie may be able to help. Visit AbbVie.com/myAbbVieAssist to learn more.

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US-BCM-210764 02/22

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Summary of Information about BOTOX® (onabotulinumtoxinA)

What is the most important information I should know about BOTOX®?

BOTOX® may cause serious side effects that can be life threatening. Call your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of these problems any time (hours to weeks) after injection of BOTOX®:

- **Problems swallowing, speaking, or breathing,** due to weakening of associated muscles, can be severe and result in loss of life. You are at the highest risk if these problems are pre-existing before injection. Swallowing problems may last for several months
- **Spread of toxin effects.** The effect of botulinum toxin may affect areas away from the injection site and cause serious symptoms including: loss of strength and all-over muscle weakness, double vision, blurred vision and drooping eyelids, hoarseness or change or loss of voice, trouble saying words clearly, loss of bladder control, trouble breathing, and trouble swallowing

There has not been a confirmed serious case of spread of toxin effect away from the injection site when BOTOX® has been used at the recommended dose to treat Chronic Migraine.

BOTOX® may cause loss of strength or general muscle weakness, vision problems, or dizziness within hours to weeks of taking BOTOX®. **If this happens, do not drive a car, operate machinery, or do other dangerous activities.**

BOTOX® dosing units are not the same as, or comparable to, any other botulinum toxin product.

What is BOTOX®?

BOTOX® is prescription medicine a medical professional injects into muscles to prevent headaches in adults with chronic migraine who have 15 or more days each month with headache lasting 4 or more hours each day in people 18 years and older.

It is not known whether BOTOX® is safe or effective to prevent headaches in people with migraine who have 14 or fewer headache days each month (episodic migraine).

Who should not receive BOTOX®?

Do not receive BOTOX® if you are: allergic to any of the ingredients in BOTOX® such as botulinum toxin type A and human serum albumin; had an allergic reaction to another botulinum toxin product such as Myobloc® (rimabotulinumtoxinB), Dysport® (abobotulinumtoxinA), or Xeomin® (incobotulinumtoxinA); or have a skin infection at the planned injection site.

What should I tell my doctor before treatment?

Tell your doctor about all your muscle or nerve conditions, such as amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (Lou Gehrig's disease), myasthenia gravis, or Lambert-Eaton syndrome, as you may be at increased risk of serious side effects.

Tell your doctor if you have or have had breathing problems such as asthma or emphysema; swallowing problems; bleeding issues; plan to or have had surgery; have forehead muscle weakness such as trouble raising your eyebrows; drooping eyelids; or any changes to your face.

Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, are breastfeeding or plan to breast feed. It is not known if BOTOX® (onabotulinumtoxinA) can harm your unborn baby or if BOTOX® passes into breast milk.

What Are Common Side Effects?

The most common side effects include neck pain; headache; migraine; slight or partial facial paralysis; drooping eyebrows; eyelid drooping; bronchitis; musculoskeletal stiffness; muscular weakness; pain in 1 or more muscles, ligaments, tendons, or bones; muscle spasms; injection site pain; and high blood pressure. Other side effects have been reported including allergic reactions e.g. itching, rash, red itchy welts, wheezing, asthma symptoms, or dizziness or feeling faint.

These are not all of the possible side effects. Call your doctor for medical advice if you experience any side effects after treatment with BOTOX®.

What Should I Tell My Doctor About Medicines and Vitamins I Take?

Using BOTOX® with certain other medicines may cause serious side effects. **Do not start any new medicines until you have told your doctor that you have received BOTOX® in the past.** Tell your doctor if you have received an injection with another botulinum toxin product in the last 4 months, such as Myobloc®, Dysport®, or Xeomin®. Be sure your doctor knows which product you received.

Tell your doctor about all prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins and herbal supplements you take; recent antibiotic injections; anticholinergics; muscle relaxants; allergy or cold medicine; sleep medicine; aspirin-like products; and blood thinners. **Ask your doctor if you are not sure whether your medicine is listed above.**

To Learn More

If you would like more information, talk to your doctor and/or go to BotoxChronicMigraine.com for full Product Information.

You may report side effects to the FDA at www.fda.gov/medwatch or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Based on v2.0MG1145 Rev. 06/2019

BCM69906-v4 05/20

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CUISINE AND CAUSES

SUPER BOWL BREAKFAST

Feb. 11 • JW Marriott Desert Ridge Resort • 8 a.m. (MT)

The 36th NFL-sanctioned Super Bowl Breakfast will take place at the JW Marriott Desert Ridge Resort in Phoenix. This year's program features the presentation of the Bart Starr Award to Kirk Cousins of the Minnesota Vikings for outstanding character, integrity, and leadership on and off the field. Past winners include Russell Wilson, Eli Manning, Peyton Manning, Drew Brees, and Kurt Warner. The lineup for the Breakfast features Pro Football Hall of Famers Tony Dungy and Anthony Muñoz, Sam Acho, and Akbar Gbajabiamila among other NFL greats to be announced. Tickets are available at **SuperBowlbreakfast.com**.

Kirk Cousins, the winner of the 2022 Bart Starr Award, will be honored at the Super Bowl Breakfast.

Nick Wass/AP Images

TASTE OF THE NFL

Presented by Frito-Lay, Quaker, and the PepsiCo Foundation

Feb. 11 • Château Luxe, Phoenix • 4 p.m. (MT)

Taste of the NFL is the premier Super Bowl purpose-driven culinary experience where current and former NFL players pair up with top chefs to tackle hunger and food insecurity among youth. All net proceeds support national nonprofit GENYOUth's End Student Hunger fund. Taste of the NFL, presented by Frito-Lay, Quaker, and the PepsiCo Foundation, will be hosted by celebrity chefs Andrew Zimmern, Carla Hall, Tim Love, Mark Bucher, and Lasheeda Perry, along with over 25 Arizona culinary superstars, who will tempt guests with delicious tastings, spirited refreshments, and exquisite wines. They will be joined by top NFL players and Legends signing autographs and greeting guests, along with other "surprise and delight" moments. To purchase tickets and learn more, visit **tasteofthenfl.com**.

COMMUNITY SPIRIT

KICKOFF TO REBUILD

Feb. 10 • Ocotillo Rose Neighborhood • 8 a.m. (MT)

In partnership with Lowe's, the Official Home Improvement Retail Sponsor of the National Football League, Rebuilding Together will provide essential home repairs for six neighbors and the Swift Kids Branch Boys and Girls Club in the Ocotillo Rose neighborhood of Glendale as part of Kickoff to Rebuild. Kickoff to Rebuild is an annual Super Bowl-sanctioned event hosted by Rebuilding Together, a leading national housing nonprofit with a mission to repair the homes of people in need and revitalize communities. This year's event will be led by local nonprofit affiliate Rebuilding Together Valley of the Sun. For more than 28 years, Rebuilding Together has worked in Super Bowl cities to rebuild homes and bring neighborhoods together. To date, through Kickoff to Rebuild, Rebuilding Together has repaired more than 170 homes, engaged more than 5,000 volunteers, and invested more than $5 million in communities nationwide. For more information, go to **rebuildingtogether.org/ktr**.

Rebuilding Together has engaged more than 5,000 volunteers for its annual Kickoff to Rebuild projects.

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Stay connected and download NFL OnePass for all the most up-to-date fan experience information throughout the week and to manage Super Bowl LVII game tickets. IOS: Visit the app store to download the **NFL OnePass App** for all Super Bowl LVII information on the App Store. Google Play: Be sure to download the **NFL OnePass App** for all Super Bowl LVII information on Google Play.

WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA

- For more information on all Super Bowl LVII events, visit **SuperBowl.com**
- Follow @SuperBowl and @AZsuperbowl, and tag your posts and photos with #SBLVII
- Questions? Tag your posts with #SBQuestions

PLAY FOOTBALL FESTIVAL

The NFL is hosting its annual Play Football Family Festival – a free, interactive football experience for the entire family – on Saturday, Feb. 11, (10 a.m. to 1 p.m. MT) at Hamilton High School in Chandler.

The NFL Play Football Family Festival brings to life the excitement of the game through an interactive experience for youth and high school football communities, fans, and coaches.

Local youth and families can expect appearances from the Arizona Cardinals, a Nike Experience, equipment fittings with Riddell, a game truck featuring NFL games, a parent forum hosted by NFL Legends, autograph signings, Flag football skills, and drills, food trucks, giveaways, and more.

Pre-registration for the Play Football Festival is required. Learn more about the Play Football program at **playfootball.NFL.com**.

NFL Network

NFL Network: We're Live from Arizona

FOR THE FOURTH TIME EVER, the Super Bowl returns to Arizona – and NFL Network is there to be your one-stop shop for everything surrounding Super Bowl LVII!

NFL Network provides extensive, on-location Super Bowl Week coverage for the 20th time, this year offering more than 90 hours of live programming starting Monday, Feb. 6, through Super Bowl Sunday on Feb. 12.

On Super Bowl Sunday, *NFL GameDay Morning* is live from State Farm Stadium starting at 9 a.m. (ET), kicking off more than eight hours of coverage leading up to the big game – hosted by Rich Eisen, Kurt Warner, Michael Irvin, Steve Mariucci, Ian Rapoport, Cynthia Frelund, Rachel Bonnetta, Emmanuel Sanders, and others. Following the game, *NFL GameDay Final* provides postgame analysis and interviews with the Super Bowl LVII champions.

Throughout the week, wake up with *Good Morning Football* (Monday-Friday at 7 a.m.) hosted by Jamie Erdahl, Jason McCourty, Peter Schrager, Kyle Brandt, and Will Selva. *Super Bowl Live* (Monday-Saturday at 1 p.m.) provides daily updates, analysis, interviews, and practice reports from NFL Network talent based in various locations throughout Arizona. Recap the day's action each evening with special editions of *NFL Total Access* at 7 p.m., hosted by MJ Acosta-Ruiz.

On Monday, Feb. 6, NFL Network provides comprehensive coverage of *Super Bowl Opening Night* when the two teams address the media for the first time ahead of Super Bowl LVII.

Additional prime-time specials on NFL Network during the week include *NFL GameDay View* (Friday, Feb. 10, at 8 p.m.), *Super Bowl LVII Countdown* (Saturday, Feb. 11, at 9 p.m.), *The Hall of Fame Knocks: Welcome to Canton* (Saturday, Feb. 11, at 8 p.m.), *NFL 360* (Tuesday, Feb. 7, at 8 p.m.), and more.

For more programming details and information on all of NFL Network's Super Bowl LVII coverage, visit **NFL.com/nflnetwork** and follow **@NFLMedia** on Twitter.

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FOX Set to Shine

FOX SPORTS MARKS ITS MILESTONE 10th Super Bowl broadcast with Super Bowl LVII, on the heels of the most robust postseason schedule of any network in 40 years.

FOX Sports' lead NFL announce team of play-by-play announcer Kevin Burkhardt and three-time Pro Bowl tight end Greg Olsen call Super Bowl LVII on FOX. Erin Andrews, the first woman singularly honored with the Pat Summerall Award, and Tom Rinaldi, a 17-time Sports Emmy Award winner, report live from the field. Mike Pereira, former NFL Vice President of Officiating, offers rules analysis.

FOX Sports offers seven-and-a-half hours of live pregame coverage on Super Bowl Sunday. *FOX Super Bowl LVII Pregame* airs live from State Farm Stadium beginning at 1 p.m. (ET). Curt Menefee hosts alongside Terry Bradshaw. The duo is joined by Howie Long, Michael Strahan, Jimmy Johnson, Jay Glazer, and Rob Gronkowski. Also joining pregame coverage are Charissa Thompson, Sean Payton, Charles Woodson, Michael Vick, Peter Schrager, Kristina Pink, Cooper Manning, Burkhardt, Olsen, Andrews, and Rinaldi.

Skip & Shannon: Undisputed with Skip Bayless, Shannon Sharpe, and Jen Hale kicks off FOX Super Bowl Sunday coverage at 11 a.m., followed by NFL Films' *Road to the Super Bowl* at 12 p.m. Live postgame coverage can be found on the *NFL ON FOX Postgame Show* (10 p.m.).

FS1's coverage begins each weekday with *The Carton Show* (7 a.m. ET). On Feb. 9 & 10, *Skip & Shannon: Undisputed* (9:30 a.m.), *The Herd With Colin Cowherd* (12 p.m.), *First Things First* (3 p.m.), and *Speak* (4:30 p.m.) are live from Glendale.

On Saturday, Feb. 11, a special edition of *The Herd With Colin Cowherd* from State Farm Stadium airs at 6 p.m., followed by the FOX Sports Films premiere of its newest documentary, *The Perfect 10*, at 8 p.m., and then a special edition of *First Things First* at 9:30 p.m., all on FOX.

Live streaming of FOX Sports programming, including the exclusive presentation of Super Bowl LVII, is available on FOXSports.com and the FOX Sports app. For a full listing of FOX Sports' coverage, visit **FOXSports.com** or **FOXSports.com/press pass**.

FOX DEPORTES

FOX Deportes presents the exclusive Spanish-language telecast of the Super Bowl for the fourth time.

FOX's Super Bowl LVII broadcast team features (left to right) Tom Rinaldi, Kevin Burkhardt, Greg Olsen, and Erin Andrews.

The network's lead NFL broadcast team of renowned play-by-play announcer Adrian Garcia Marquez and two-time Pro Bowl offensive lineman Alejandro Villanueva call Super LVII live on FOX Deportes. Spanish television legend Jessi Losada and Rodolfo Landeros join for studio coverage.

Throughout the week, the FOX Deportes NFL talent line up presents over 25 hours of coverage, beginning Monday, Feb. 6, with a special three-hour program from *Super Bowl Opening Night*. On Super Bowl Sunday, FOX Deportes offers nine hours of live coverage, including *El Entretiempo*, *Total Sports 360*, and a pregame show beginning at 4 p.m. (ET) live from State Farm Stadium.

WESTWOOD ONE IS THE RADIO HOME OF THE SUPER BOWL

For the 36th consecutive year and 50th time overall, Westwood One will serve as the exclusive network radio home of the Super Bowl. Beginning at 5 p.m. (ET), Kevin Harlan and Super Bowl XXXIV MVP and Hall of Fame quarterback Kurt Warner will call the action to millions of listeners tuned in across 700 radio stations nationwide, in 175 countries, and nearly 250 ships at sea via the American Forces Radio Network. Fans also can hear the broadcast streamed on **westwoodonesports.com**, via SiriusXM, as well as on NFL+ and the NFL App. This is Harlan's 13th Super Bowl broadcast for the network, and Warner's fifth. CBS Sports rules analyst and former NFL referee Gene Steratore will also join them in the radio broadcast booth.

Kevin Harlan (left) and Kurt Warner

The award-winning Laura Okmin and former NFL defensive lineman Mike Golic will serve as sideline reporters. Scott Graham hosts Westwood One's pregame, halftime, and postgame coverage live from State Farm Stadium. Hall of Fame offensive lineman Tony Boselli and former NFL defensive back Jason McCourty will contribute to Westwood One's 4.5-hour pregame coverage from Arizona, which kicks off at 2 p.m. (ET) with *Super Bowl Preview*. *Super Bowl Insider* begins at 3 p.m., and *Super Sunday* follows at 4 p.m.

For the 25th straight year, Howard Deneroff is the Executive Producer of the Super Bowl broadcast on Westwood One. This is his 34th Super Bowl overall for the network. Mike Eaby is the coordinating producer. Aaron Cummins and Brian Finkelstein will produce the Super Bowl LVII pregame, halftime, and postgame shows.

Westwood One Sports is home to some of the most exciting sports broadcasts in audio. In addition to being the exclusive network radio partner to the NFL since 1987, its other extensive properties include NCAA Basketball, including the NCAA® men's and women's tournaments and the Final Four®; The Masters; NCAA football; and other marquee sports events.

DAVID YURMAN

CURB CHAIN COLLECTION

Walter Payton NFL Man of the Year

PRESENTED BY NATIONWIDE

Considered the league's most prestigious honor, the Walter Payton NFL Man of the Year Award presented by Nationwide recognizes an NFL player for outstanding community service activities off the field, as well as excellence on the field. First established in 1970, the national award was renamed in 1999 after the late Hall of Fame Chicago Bears running back Walter Payton.

All 32 team winners are being highlighted as nominees and recognized for their important work during the week leading up to Super Bowl LVII. The 2022 Walter Payton NFL Man of the Year will be announced during the *NFL Honors* awards show on Thursday, Feb. 9, and all 32 winners will be recognized on gameday at State Farm Stadium.

Gregory Payan/AP Images

Each nominee will receive up to a $55,000 donation in their name to their charity of choice. The recipient of the Walter Payton NFL Man of the Year Award will receive up to a $255,000 donation to the charity of their choice. All donations are courtesy of the NFL Foundation and Nationwide.

Beginning in 2017, the Walter Payton NFL Man of the Year trophy silhouette came to life in uniform elements to further recognize past award winners and current nominees. The three current players who have won the award – J.J. Watt, Calais Campbell, and Russell Wilson – wear a Man of the Year patch on their jerseys to recognize their outstanding contributions to the game and to their communities. All 2022 nominees have worn a Man of the Year helmet decal beginning in Week 14 in recognition of their accomplishments on and off the field.

For the list of all 32 team winners, turn to page 193. Learn more about the Walter Payton NFL Man of the Year Award by visiting **NFL.com/manoftheyear**.

NFL PLAY 60 SUPER KID

Gilbert, Ariz., native Julia Crossley is this year's NFL PLAY 60 Super Kid. Julia was chosen because of her involvement with Fuel Up to Play 60, a program created by the NFL and America's dairy farmers. Julia is serving as the official NFL PLAY 60 Super Kid during Super Bowl Week and will be recognized at the start of the second half of Super Bowl LVII.

Julia Crossley

Julia's dedication to creating a healthier school community made her a natural fit as this year's NFL PLAY 60 Super Kid. She has become a leader at school through her involvement in the Fuel Up to Play 60 program, the nation's largest in-school nutrition and physical activity program. With her Fuel Up to Play 60 Team, Julia volunteers and helps others learn strategies to stay healthy and be physically active for at least 60 minutes a day. She participated in a breakfast cookoff with her classmates to show other students what a healthy breakfast that includes dairy looks like, and she also helps to host fun runs at her school throughout the year to show how physical activity can be enjoyable.

Julia learned of the honor when she was surprised by the hosts of ABC's *Good Morning America*, with the help of Arizona Cardinals tight end Zach Ertz, a player from her favorite NFL team. For more information on NFL PLAY 60, visit **NFL.com/PLAY60**.

SUPER BOWL WATCH PARTY PRESENTED BY VERIZON

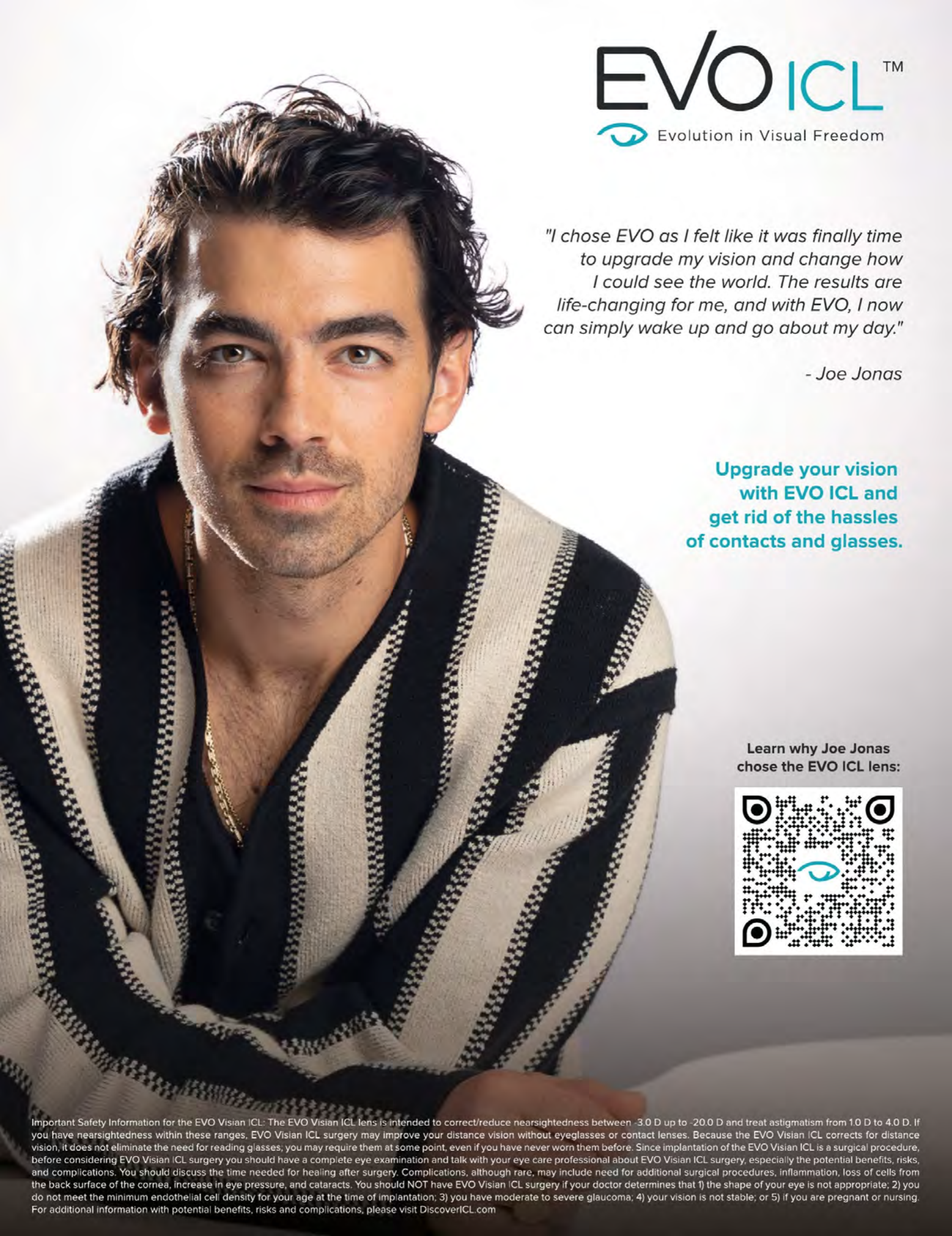
The Arizona Super Bowl Host Committee is welcoming locals and visitors to the first-ever Super Bowl Watch Party on February 12 presented by Verizon. The free ultimate tailgate watch party wraps up the Super Bowl Experience presented by Lowe's at Hance Park, the four-day fan festival.

On gameday, the Super Bowl Watch Party opens at 11 a.m. (MT) and features live entertainment with DJ Solomon leading up to Super Bowl LVII kickoff on FOX at 4:30 p.m. The game will be broadcast live on the Verizon stage, featuring Arizona's largest high-definition LED screens.

"We are thrilled to host the first official Super Bowl Watch Party with our partners from Verizon," said Jay Parry, President & Chief Executive Officer of the Arizona Super Bowl Host Committee. "This is the perfect spot to spend Super Bowl Sunday with lively entertainment and interactive fun leading right up to kickoff, when the game will be shown on several super-sized screens on the Verizon stage."

GAMEDAY EXPERIENCE

GameDay Experience offers Super Bowl LVII ticketholders an exclusive pregame party at State Farm Stadium from 12:30 p.m. until 3:30 p.m. (MT). Ticketholders can take photos with the Vince Lombardi Trophy, find exclusive merchandise at NFL Shop presented by Visa, buy food and beverages at several on-site locations, watch FOX talent on their gameday set, and enjoy live music and dance performances on various stages as we countdown to kickoff!



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- Joe Jonas

Upgrade your vision with EVO ICL and get rid of the hassles of contacts and glasses.

Learn why Joe Jonas chose the EVO ICL lens:

Important Safety Information for the EVO Visian ICL: The EVO Visian ICL lens is intended to correct/reduce nearsightedness between -3.0 D up to -20.0 D and treat astigmatism from 1.0 D to 4.0 D. If you have nearsightedness within these ranges, EVO Visian ICL surgery may improve your distance vision without eyeglasses or contact lenses. Because the EVO Visian ICL corrects for distance vision, it does not eliminate the need for reading glasses; you may require them at some point, even if you have never worn them before. Since implantation of the EVO Visian ICL is a surgical procedure, before considering EVO Visian ICL surgery you should have a complete eye examination and talk with your eye care professional about EVO Visian ICL surgery, especially the potential benefits, risks, and complications. You should discuss the time needed for healing after surgery. Complications, although rare, may include need for additional surgical procedures, inflammation, loss of cells from the back surface of the cornea, increase in eye pressure, and cataracts. You should NOT have EVO Visian ICL surgery if your doctor determines that 1) the shape of your eye is not appropriate; 2) you do not meet the minimum endothelial cell density for your age at the time of implantation; 3) you have moderate to severe glaucoma; 4) your vision is not stable; or 5) if you are pregnant or nursing. For additional information with potential benefits, risks and complications, please visit DiscoverICL.com

A Pregame Lineup Like Never Before

Acclaimed musician and songwriter **CHRIS STAPLETON** will sing the national anthem prior to Super Bowl LVII. An eight-time GRAMMY®, 15-time CMA, and 10-time ACM Award winner, Stapleton is one of the country's most respected and beloved musicians.

Twelve-time GRAMMY® Award-winning recording artist, songwriter, and producer **BABYFACE** will sing "America the Beautiful" prior to the game. Babyface has produced and written 125 Top 10 hits, 44 No. 1 R&B hits, and 16 No. 1 pop hits.

In addition, Emmy-Award winning actress **SHERYL LEE RALPH** will sing "Lift Every Voice and Sing." Ralph is also a Golden Globe nominee, Critics Choice Winner, Tony Award nominee, NAACP Image Award nominee, and Independent Spirit Award winner. She can currently be seen starring in the smash hit comedy series *Abbott Elementary*.

On behalf of the National Association of the Deaf (NAD), renowned actor and Arizona native **TROY KOTSUR** will perform the national anthem in American Sign Language (ASL). For his acclaimed work in the movie *CODA*, Kotsur became only the second Deaf person ever to win an Oscar, in the category of Best Supporting Actor. **COLIN DENNY**, a Deaf Native American, will sign "America the Beautiful" and is a proud member of the Navajo Nation in Arizona. Deaf performer **JUSTINA MILES** will sign "Lift Every Voice and Sing" and also provide the ASL rendition of the *Apple Music Super Bowl Halftime Show*.

Prior to the game, **DJ SNAKE** will act as a special guest DJ during player warmups.

To commemorate 50 years of Women Flying in the U.S. Navy, the service will conduct a flyover of State Farm Stadium during the national anthem with women aviators as part of the formation. The formation will be composed of an F-35C Lightning II from the "Argonauts" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 147, two F/A-18F Super Hornets from the "Flying Eagles" of VFA-122, and an EA-18G Growler from the "Vikings" of Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 129.

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PLAY HAS NO LIMITS

Rihanna Ready to Rule at Apple Music Super Bowl Halftime Show

International icon, entrepreneur, and philanthropist **RIHANNA** will take center stage at State Farm Stadium for the *Apple Music Super Bowl Halftime Show* at Super Bowl LVII.

"Rihanna is a generational talent, a woman of humble beginnings who has surpassed expectations at every turn. A person born on the small island of Barbados who became one of the most prominent artists ever. Self-made in business and entertainment," said Shawn "JAY-Z" Carter, whose Roc Nation will serve as the strategic entertainment advisors of the live performance.

"We are thrilled to welcome Rihanna to the *Apple Music Super Bowl Halftime Show* stage," said Seth Dudowsky, NFL Head of Music. "Rihanna is a once-in-a-generation artist who has been a cultural force throughout her career. We look forward to collaborating with Rihanna, Roc Nation, and Apple Music to bring fans another historic Halftime Show performance."

"Rihanna is an incredible recording artist who is a favorite for many millions of Apple Music customers around the world," noted Oliver Schusser, Apple's vice president of Apple Music and Beats. "We're excited to partner with Rihanna, Roc Nation, and the NFL to bring music and sports fans a momentous show – what an incredible artist for the inaugural *Apple Music Super Bowl Halftime Show*."

The *Apple Music Super Bowl Halftime Show* telecast will be produced by DPS with Roc Nation and Jesse Collins serving as executive producers, and Hamish Hamilton serving as director.

Past Super Bowl Halftime Show performances include The Weeknd, Jennifer Lopez, Shakira, Justin Timberlake, Lady Gaga, Katy Perry, Bruno Mars, Prince, Madonna, and more.

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AVNET®

DESIGN IN THE DESERT

With more than 300 locations worldwide, Avnet is a global technology solutions company delivering design, supply chain and logistics solutions. We're proud to be a part of Arizona's flourishing technology landscape and commissioned artist Meg Stapp to capture our state's beautiful Sonoran Desert botanicals.

Super Bowl Experience visitors saw this piece at our booth and soon visitors at our Phoenix headquarters will see Meg's artwork displayed to commemorate Avnet serving as an official partner of the Arizona Super Bowl Host Committee.

We invite you to share your experience with a virtual post card of this original art. And, when you need help turning your ideas into technology's next masterpiece, we invite you to contact our own design artists.

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WISH THEY WERE HERE?

Scan the QR code below to learn more about the artist and share a little bit of Arizona by sending a virtual postcard to your friends and family.

IN THE CLUTCH

WITH THE SUPER BOWL OUTCOME STILL UP IN THE AIR, THESE QUARTERBACK-RECEIVER COMBINATIONS HAVE SEIZED THE MOMENT.

BY BARRY WILNER

OH, WOW! DID YOU SEE THAT?

No, your eyes didn't deceive you. Maybe your heart skipped a beat, but that incredible pass completion under the most dire circumstances really did happen.

The great quarterback-receiver combinations in Super Bowl history have found a way to produce something extraordinary in the tensest of times. Working against them were a variety of challenges, from a vaunted opposing defense to the quickly diminishing time on the game clock. Perhaps weather was a factor. Or injuries. Or history itself.

Yet they shrugged it all off and stamped themselves as Super Bowl legends. The way Matthew Stafford and Cooper Kupp did in the Rams' 23-20 win over the Bengals last February. The victorious 15-play drive that covered 90 yards is as epic as any in championship game lore.

"That's hard work, that's hours together," Stafford said afterward. "I just thank Coach (Sean McVay) for putting it: 'Hey, Matthew, you and Coop go get this thing done.' He kept calling plays for him, kept finding ways to get him the ball. He made unbelievable plays. That's what he does."

Stafford completed all four passes he threw to Kupp on the drive, accounting for 39 yards, the last of those a 1-yard TD pass in the right flat that provided the winning points.

The 2021 numbers tell it all about this combo: Stafford hit on 55 of 61 throws to Kupp in the fourth quarter of regular-season and playoff games. They gained 802 yards (14.6 yards per catch), and Kupp scored seven touchdowns.

Yet Kupp, the NFL's 2021 Offensive Player of the Year as well as the winner of the Rozelle Trophy as Super Bowl LVI MVP, shrugged off his essential contributions.

"There were so many guys on this team that have just respected this game, have put in the work and the time," he said. "That was a huge thing coming into this. So many guys just said, 'Hey, we've got guys here that deserve a Super Bowl. We've got to win this for them.'"

They did, following the paths of these other clutch quarterback-wide receiver tandems.

Rams wide receiver Cooper Kupp (10) cradles the game-winning touchdown pass against the Bengals in Super Bowl LVI. Kupp caught a game-high eight passes from quarterback Matthew Stafford in the victory.

Jose Carlos Fajardo/AP Photos

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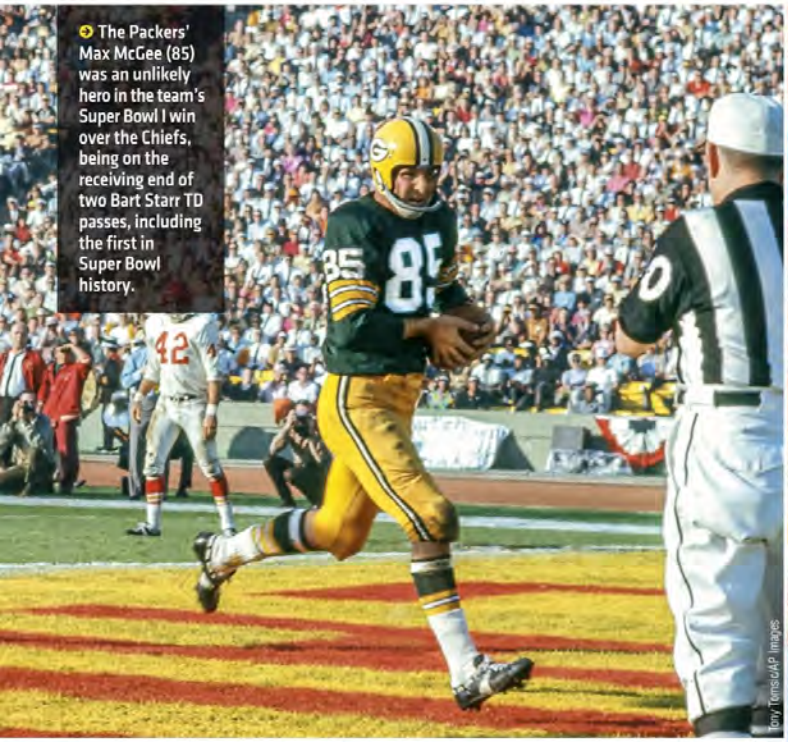


The Packers' Max McGee (85) was an unlikely hero in the team's Super Bowl I win over the Chiefs, being on the receiving end of two Bart Starr TD passes, including the first in Super Bowl history.

Tony Tomsic/AP Images

Few teams have experienced the pressure cooker the Packers were in for the initial AFL-NFL Championship Game (later to be known as Super Bowl I) in 1967. The more established NFL considered the upstart AFL inferior, and coach Vince Lombardi and his dynastic Packers were reminded constantly about needing to give the Chiefs a lesson.

"There was never a minute when we didn't hear about representing the NFL, not just Green Bay," quarterback Bart Starr recalled.

The Packers represented brilliantly, setting the tone on their second possession when Starr found Max McGee for a 37-yard touchdown, the first score in Super Bowl history. That it would be McGee, who at age 34 was preparing to go into coaching, was a minor miracle. The wide receiver was out partying the night before the game, knowing he'd barely see the field unless starter Boyd Dowler got hurt. Then Dowler got hurt.

But McGee came through on that critical play, reaching back to corral Starr's pass, and later added another touchdown as part of his seven-catch, 138-yard afternoon in the 35-10 romp.

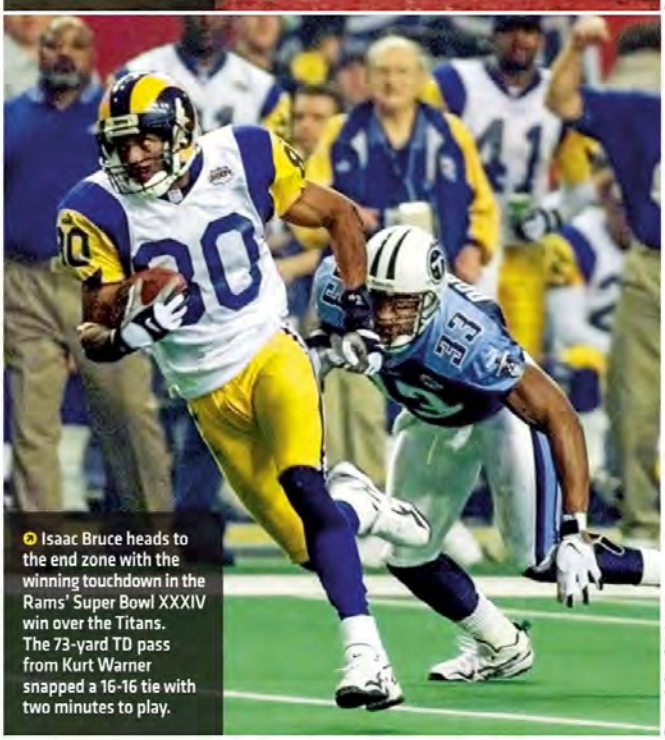
The payoff went from Joe Cool to JT: 49ers quarterback Joe Montana to his third option on the play, John Taylor. The 10-yard touchdown completion was, as pretty much always, the correct choice by Montana; Taylor was open on a slant with 34 seconds remaining in the fourth quarter of Super Bowl XXIII. The decisive score to beat the Bengals capped a tension-filled 92-yard, 11-play drive that, yes, began with Montana casually spotting actor John Candy in the stadium crowd.

Still, the key – as he was to most 49ers wins – was Jerry Rice. In perhaps the greatest performance by the most accomplished receiver in pro football history, Rice made 11 catches for a Super Bowl-record 215 yards and scored San Francisco's first touchdown. On the winning march, he had three receptions for 51 yards, all while performing on an injured ankle.

"Today is a day I will never forget," Rice said while holding his 18-month-old daughter, Jaqui, in the locker room. "It was just stupendous."

Joe Montana (16) celebrates with John Taylor (82) and Randy Cross (51) after throwing a TD pass that rallied the 49ers past the Bengals in Super Bowl XXIII. Taylor's 10-yard grab with 34 seconds to go was his only catch of the game.

Rusty Kennedy/AP Images



Isaac Bruce heads to the end zone with the winning touchdown in the Rams' Super Bowl XXXIV win over the Titans. The 73-yard TD pass from Kurt Warner snapped a 16-16 tie with two minutes to play.

Timothy A. Clary/Getty Images

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HELMETS TO HARDHATS

The Greatest Show on Turf had just been knocked to the ground by the Titans. Kurt Warner, Marshall Faulk, and star receivers Isaac Bruce and Torry Holt had seen the Rams cough up a 16-0 lead in Super Bowl XXXIV. The defense looked shaky and the team's record-setting offense was sputtering.

With 2:05 remaining and the ball back in their hands of what was now a tie game, the Rams eschewed using up the clock to position themselves for a game-winning field goal. Warner called for "Twins Right, Ace Right 999 Halfback Balloon." All three wideouts would run deep routes.

Bruce, like Warner an eventual Pro Football Hall of Famer, sped down the right sideline, but the pass was underthrown. Bruce saw that; defender Denard Walker did not. As Walker stumbled, Bruce turned to haul in the throw at the Titans 38.

"The guy covering me never saw the ball and he fell on his face," Bruce said of the last of his six receptions (for 162 yards) in the game. "After I caught the ball, the safety overran me and then it was a race to the end zone."

The 73-yard touchdown proved to be the difference, though if the Steve McNair-to-Kevin Dyson completion on the game's final play goes 1 yard longer, we'd have a different story here.

Sure, Plaxico Burress caught the 13-yard touchdown pass that destroyed the Patriots' pursuit of perfection in Super Bowl XLII. With 35 seconds remaining in the most intense of Super Bowls, New England's Ellis Hobbs missed his assignment, leaving Burress wide open deep in the left side of the end zone.

"A spiral," Eli Manning joked with late-night talk show host David Letterman days later. "That's rare for me."

Still, without the unfathomable grab by backup wideout David Tyree on New York's final drive ....

On third-and-5 from the Giants 44, the not-so-nimble Manning escaped a fierce pass rush, set himself and flung the ball high downfield. Tyree, who began the Super Bowl with more special teams tackles than catches on the season – but earlier had a 5-yard touchdown reception – posted up on Rodney Harrison and outjumped the star safety. He pinned the ball against his helmet as he fell to the ground at the Patriots 24 with 59 seconds left.

With a fresh set of downs and all the momentum, the outcome seemed inevitable.

"I don't know that there's ever been a bigger play in the Super Bowl than that play," Giants coach Tom Coughlin said afterward.

He might be right.

David Tyree teamed with QB Eli Manning to play a huge role in the Giants' Super Bowl XLII upset of the Patriots, catching a 5-yard TD pass early in the fourth quarter and making the "helmet catch" on the game-winning touchdown drive.

Paul Sancya/AP Images

The Steelers looked comfortable, ahead 20-7 in the fourth quarter of Super Bowl XLIII. Then the Cardinals' Kurt Warner and Larry Fitzgerald led a surge that brought Arizona a three-point lead with 2:47 remaining.

Desperation time for Pittsburgh. Improvisation time, too.

Ben Roethlisberger and Santonio Holmes hooked up for gains of 14, 13, and 40 yards on the ensuing drive. Suddenly, the Steelers were

Mario Manningham (82) jumpstarted the Giants' game-winning touchdown drive in Super Bowl XLVI with his incredible over-the-shoulder reception of an Eli Manning pass. The 38-yard gain was one of five catches he had on the day, three coming on that drive.

Heinz Kluetmeier/Getty Images

at the Arizona 6-yard line. Only 48 seconds remained.

The next play broke down and Roethlisberger had to scramble – not a pretty sight. Much prettier was Holmes streaking across the back of the end zone, then extending his arms as high up as he could in the right corner. With no room to spare, Holmes caught Roethlisberger's throw behind a trio of defenders while dragging his toes inbounds by millimeters.

Down he went, the winning touchdown barely secured.

"Great players step up in big-time games to make plays," said Holmes, whose game-high nine receptions accounted for 131 yards. "I wanted to be the guy to make the plays for this team."

Just as he did in the momentous upset of New England four years prior, Manning delivered some heroics in another stunning Giants win over the Patriots, this time in Super Bowl XLVI.

In this one, there was no need for a never-could-happen helmet catch or a botched coverage for the winning touchdown. Instead, Manning threw probably the most precise pass of his 16-year NFL career.

New England built a 17-9 third-quarter lead before the Giants chipped away with a pair of field goals. Still down by two points with 3:53 remaining in the game, New York's offense took possession at its 10. Patriots coach Bill Belichick lectured his secondary to "make them go to Manningham."

Oops.

PROLIFIC PAIRINGS

Here are the Super Bowl stats of some of the best-known quarterback-receiver duos in NFL history.

Quarterback - Receiver (Team)	G	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	Lng
Tom Brady - Rob Gronkowski (Patriots/Bucs)	5	29	384	12.6	5	29
Jim Kelly - Andre Reed (Bills)	4	22	246	11.2	0	40
Joe Montana - Jerry Rice (49ers)	2	18	363	20.2	4	44
Terry Bradshaw - Lynn Swann (Steelers)	4	16	364	22.8	3	64
Troy Aikman - Michael Irvin (Cowboys)	2	16	256	16.0	2	25
Kurt Warner - Torry Holt (Rams)	2	12	158	13.2	1	32

Rob Gronkowski

John Bazemore/AP Images

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Wide receiver Santonio Holmes (10) was the target of Ben Roethlisberger's TD pass in the final minute of Super Bowl XLIII, lifting Pittsburgh past Arizona for its sixth Super Bowl title.

Icon Sports Media/USA TODAY Sports

Paul Spinelli/Alamy

Nick Foles (9) became the first quarterback to catch a touchdown pass in the Super Bowl, his 1-yard grab of a Trey Burton toss spurring the Eagles to their Super Bowl LII win over the Patriots.

Julian Edelman (11) made a miraculous grab of a Tom Brady pass during the Patriots' late scoring drive in Super Bowl LI against Atlanta. Across four Super Bowls, Edelman caught 24 passes from Brady.

Ric Tapia/AP Images

Manning uncorked a bullet down the left sideline that Manningham hauled in over his shoulder between two defenders while somehow staying inbounds. That 38-yarder was one of three receptions he had on the winning touchdown drive.

Belichick challenged the catch, but even as the video review was taking place, Patriots QB Tom Brady noted, "He caught it."

Yep.

Somehow, Julian Edelman never made an All-Pro Team or a Pro Bowl. Yet of all the targets Brady has relied on in collecting his seven Super Bowl rings, no one has been more dependable than Edelman.

Particularly in the toughest spots.

Edelman was the MVP of Super Bowl LIII, but it was in the amazing comeback victory against the Falcons two years earlier in Super Bowl LI that the former college quarterback made his most unforgettable play.

His 23-yard grab that even in slow-motion or stop-frame replay is barely decipherable as a catch highlighted the Patriots' 91-yard drive that forced the only overtime in Super Bowl history. New England had rallied from a 28-3 deficit and eventually won, 34-28.

The ball bounced off Atlanta cornerback Robert Alford's hands and then his legs. As it softly fell toward the turf, a nearly prone Edelman snatched it. Replays showed Edelman's red-gloved hands pinning the ball against the defender's foot before controlling it.

"I knew I caught it," said Edelman, who later hauled in a 15-yard reception on the game-winning drive in overtime. "No doubt."

And no doubt one of the most mesmerizing critical catches in a Super Bowl.

Not all quarterbacks make the game's pivotal play by throwing the ball.

Everyone in Philadelphia and New England knows that.

Late in the first half of Super Bowl LII, with the Eagles leading the Patriots, 15-12, and facing fourth down at the New England 1, QB Nick Foles – a backup for most of the season until starter Carson Wentz injured his knee – slowly walked to the sideline.

Kick a field goal? No way. Instead, Foles and coach Doug Pederson, never afraid to gamble, dialed up some razzle-dazzle.

As planned, Foles appeared to change the play call at the line, moving behind his right tackle as running back Corey Clement took a direct snap. While Clement pitched the ball to tight end Trey Burton (himself a former college backup QB), Foles wandered, undetected, into the right side of the end zone. He easily caught Burton's throw in perhaps the most famous reversal of roles the title game has seen.

Mention "Philly Special" and watch Eagles fans fly. And Patriots fans cringe.

Barry Wilner, *who never dropped a pass in a Super Bowl, covered the NFL and a variety of other sports for 46 years at The Associated Press. He is a member of the Pro Football Hall of Fame Selection Committee.*

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GIANT ACHIEVEMENT

THIS YEAR, THE SUPER BOWL RETURNS TO THE SITE WHERE PERFECTION WAS MISSED BUT HISTORY WAS MADE.

BY MICHAEL EISEN

ONE TEAM ARRIVED AT SUPER BOWL XLII with the gridiron world focused on its pursuit of perfection. The other team? Some wondered how in the world it even got there.

Entering the 2007 season, the New England Patriots and New York Giants may not have been headed in opposite directions, but they were definitely traveling different roads. The fact that both routes ended at the same destination was downright shocking, outdone only by the result on that Super Sunday afternoon.

From 2001-06, New England had won three Super Bowls, advanced to the playoffs every year, and won an NFL-best 70 regular-season games. The Patriots had one of the league's most successful and secure coaches in Bill Belichick, a stud quarterback in Tom Brady, and were again atop the list of Super Bowl contenders.

The Giants weren't nearly as highly regarded. Although they had earned a second consecutive postseason berth in 2006, they faltered in the season's second half and finished 8-8. Coach Tom Coughlin's critics insisted the team's late-season slump was evidence that his old-school methods no longer resonated with players.

"Right at the end of [2006], there was turmoil," Coughlin says. "There was an adjustment that needed to be made by me – openly and honestly."

Few expected the ship to be righted. One website that penciled in the Patriots as Super Bowl favorites belittled the Giants, writing, "Start playing 'Taps' now." Their forecasted record? An NFL-worst 3-13.

No preseason predictions have ever been so right … and so wrong.

New England became the first NFL team to finish a regular season 16-0, won its first two playoff games, and headed to Arizona with a chance to match the '72 Dolphins as the league's only perfect teams. The Giants more than tripled their projected win total, going 10-6 to make the postseason as a wild card, and prevailed in three consecutive road contests en route to the franchise's first Super Bowl appearance in 17 years.

Still, during the two-week build-up to the game, it was difficult to make the case for an upset. A few did note how the Giants went toe-to-toe with the Patriots in Week 17 before falling, but those voices were drowned out by a loud chorus ready to proclaim New England the greatest team of all time.

Instead, the Giants' 17-14 victory – a game remembered 15 years later not only for the result but for how it unfolded – ranks among the biggest upsets the Super Bowl has ever seen.

From the first day of training camp in July, Belichick was aware of his team's grand expectations but kept his focus on the task at hand.

"Right now what we're trying to do is correct the mistakes from this morning," he said, "and go in and have a meeting and put in the stuff we have scheduled for this afternoon and try to go out and have a good practice. We're day-to-day right now. There's no light at the end of the tunnel."

For the Giants, it was the same approach but for different reasons. While defensive end Michael Strahan returned for what would be the 15th-and-final season of his Hall of Fame career, Tiki Barber retired after leading the team in rushing each of the previous seven seasons.

Plaxico Burress (17) hauls in the go-ahead touchdown in the final minute of the Giants' Super Bowl XLII upset of the Patriots in Arizona. New York made the playoffs as a wild card and had to win three road games just to reach the Super Bowl, while New England arrived aiming to complete the NFL's second perfect season.

Doug Pensinger/Getty Images

17
27

Eli Manning was 0-2 in the playoffs and had yet to enter the discussion of elite quarterbacks.

"I knew there was pressure on me," Manning admits. "I knew there was pressure on Coach Coughlin. I remember (thinking), 'Hey, we've got to find ways to get better.'"

Early returns seemed to validate preseason perceptions. The Patriots crushed the Jets, 38-14, on Kickoff Weekend, starting an eight-game run of double-digit victories that saw the team never score fewer than 34 points. They then defeated the defending Super Bowl champion Colts, 24-20, though Belichick downplayed the significance of the so-called statement game.

"I don't care about all that," he said. "Really. It's a football game against the Colts. That's all it was. It's one game. Our guys made a few more plays, and that's why we won."

The Giants, meanwhile, stumbled out of the gate. They lost their opener in Dallas, 45-35, then fell to the Packers, 35-13, at home. New York was 0-2 for the first time since 1996 and had allowed a whopping 80 points under new defensive coordinator Steve Spagnuolo.

"It wasn't an ideal start," Manning recalls.

A goal-line stand in the final minute of a Week 3 contest at Washington, securing a 24-17 victory, may have saved the season.

"That's where you saw the will of the team," Manning says. "Our defense had been torched and everybody was talking about how bad it was, and then it makes that stop. All of a sudden, we have something to be excited about."

"IT WASN'T A BLIND THROW – I SAW HIM THERE. YOU KNOW, DESPERATE TIMES, DESPERATE MEASURES. ... HOPEFULLY HE WAS GOING TO CATCH IT OR NOBODY WAS GOING TO GET IT."

— GIANTS QB ELI MANNING, ON HIS 32-YARD COMPLETION TO DAVID TYREE DURING THE GAME-WINNING DRIVE IN SUPER BOWL XLII

The Giants won six in a row to stand 6-2 at midseason, but then things took a wild turn. They played four more home games ... and lost all of them. They played four road games ... and were undefeated.

"It's a strange thing to go through a season where you feel like you play better on the road than at home," Manning says. "We seemed to like to make things really difficult on ourselves."

No one could say that about the Patriots. They clinched the AFC East before the end of November and finished nine games ahead of second-place Buffalo. They scored a then-league-record 589 points. Brady threw 50 touchdown passes, 23 of those caught by Randy Moss, an NFL single-season mark that still stands.

The Giants were paying attention, and not just because they were impressed with the numbers. The teams were scheduled to meet in the regular-season finale in Giants Stadium.

"You were watching what they were doing because it's history," Manning says. "And then you also know that we have to play them the last game of the season."

The Giants clinched their postseason berth in Week 16 and were locked into the fifth seed in the NFC playoffs. As a result, the game was, for all practical purposes, meaningless to them. That led to speculation Coughlin would rest some of his starters to protect them from injury.

"There were so many factors as to why I wouldn't consider it," Coughlin says. "First, the historical perspective of the New York Giants franchise playing the [final] week of the season against a 15-0 team and not play your best. I did not want to be associated with that at all. Secondly, I'm a guy that's always driving his team to be the best they can be and talking

Julie Jacobson/AP Images

Patriots receiver Randy Moss (81) caught two touchdown passes against the Giants when the teams met in the final game of the 2007 regular season. He ended the year with 23 TD receptions, an NFL record that still stands.

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about winning. So, what are they going to hear from me now? We're going to rest players? Come on. We were going to try and win."

The Giants almost pulled it off. They led for much of the game, but a 65-yard TD pass from Brady to Moss was the turning point as the Patriots rallied for a 38-35 victory. Still, the Giants walked off the field that night convinced they could prevail if the teams met again.

"We damn near beat them without having a (normal) game plan," Strahan says. "We vanilla-d down everything that we did, and it was a three-point game. The first thing Osi (Umenyiora), Justin (Tuck), and Brandon Jacobs said to me after the game was, 'If we see these guys again, we'll beat them.'"

Given their respective postseason paths, a rematch seemed unlikely.

The Patriots didn't need to leave Gillette Stadium while defeating Jacksonville and San Diego in the AFC playoffs. The Giants hit the road, where they knocked off Tampa Bay, Dallas, and Green Bay in succession, the last of those in overtime in a classic NFC Championship Game at frigid Lambeau Field.

And just like that, it was game on.

Playing in the final game of his Hall of Fame career, defensive end Michael Strahan (92) menaced Patriots quarterback Tom Brady (12) throughout Super Bowl XLII. Strahan totaled three tackles, a sack, and two QB hits as the Giants limited high-scoring New England to 14 points.

"We were on a mission," Manning says. "It was a loose team. When you're the underdog and no one is giving you a chance, sometimes you feel like you have nothing to lose. And that was the mindset. Let's go shock the world."

Two issues, however, elevated the Giants' gameday concern.

Star wide receiver Plaxico Burress slipped as he emerged from the shower at the team's temporary headquarters and sprained his medial collateral ligament. He wasn't cleared to play until 90 minutes before kickoff.

And then there were the practice adventures of David Tyree two days before the game.

"It's a red and green zone practice basically – short yardage, goal line – and David Tyree probably has the worst practice of anybody I've ever seen," Coughlin says. "He can't catch a thing; he drops every ball, ball hits him in the helmet, ball hits him in the shoulder."

Naturally, Tyree and Burress made the game's two biggest receptions, the daggers that punctured the Patriots' perfect season.

With 1:15 remaining in the fourth quarter, the Giants trailed, 14-10, and faced a third-and-5 from their own 44 when offensive coordinator Kevin Gilbride called "76 Union Y Sail." Manning took the snap and was confronted almost immediately by the Patriots' defensive front. As he stepped up in the pocket, Richard Seymour grabbed his jersey, but Manning somehow escaped from his clutches and fired the ball deep down the center of the field for Tyree.

"It wasn't a blind throw – I saw him there," Manning says. "You know, desperate times, desperate measures. There weren't a ton of other guys around, [so] hopefully he was going to catch it or nobody would get it, and then we got fourth-and-five."

Tyree leaped high and created a vice by putting the ball between his hands and his helmet, and prevented it from hitting the ground as he went down on his back – in part because he landed on safety Rodney Harrison's legs. The 32-yard gain gave the Giants a first down at the New England 24.

Four plays later, the gimpy Burress, who had

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Super Bowl XLII is remembered for the "helmet catch," when Giants QB Eli Manning (10) escaped from the Patriots' Richard Seymour (93) to complete a 32-yard pass to David Tyree (85), despite the valiant efforts of strong safety Rodney Harrison (37). The play set up the Giants' game-winning touchdown.

caught Manning's first pass of the game, collected his second and last reception, a 13-yard TD in the left corner of the end zone that put the Giants ahead.

But not until the final seconds ticked off the clock – after Brady was sacked for a 10-yard loss and threw three long passes that fell incomplete – could anyone be certain what they were witnessing was real.

Giants president and CEO John Mara called it "the greatest victory in the history of this franchise, without question."

The Patriots' final passage of the 2007 season was not nearly as happy.

"We had a great season; we just didn't win the game," Brady said afterward. "(The Super Bowl loss) doesn't take away from anything we have done over the course of the season. We had a great year."

But the perfect ending belonged to the Giants.

Michael Eisen *is the senior writer/editor of Giants.com, the New York Giants website. He has been with the Giants organization for 23 years and the 2022 season was his 37th covering the team.*

ALTITUDE *FUELED BY* ATTITUDE

WITH MICHAEL BIDWILL IN THE PILOT'S SEAT, THE CARDINALS ARE MAPPING OUT A PATH TO NEW HEIGHTS.

BY DARREN URBAN

THE SKIES BECKONED MICHAEL BIDWILL when he was a young boy. The dream of becoming a pilot was a goal all the way up until his father – Bill Bidwill, owner of the NFL's Cardinals – allowed his second son to get his pilot's license when he was in college.

In the years since, Michael Bidwill has evolved behind the controls of his aircraft, graduating from light aircraft to small and then midsize jets, and learning how to fly a helicopter as well.

In those same years, Bidwill earned a law degree, became a prosecutor, came back to help his father get a new stadium for the team, and, ultimately, took over as Cardinals owner for Bill, who passed away in 2019.

Flying is as much a part of Michael Bidwill as being an NFL owner. The two pursuits cross paths often, like when he flew No. 1 overall draft pick Kyler Murray and, two years later, free agent J.J. Watt to Arizona for the first time after being acquired by the team.

"Flying is something that requires a great amount of discipline and judgment and study and concentration and commitment because of the amount of training," Bidwill says. "Each flight is different. You never know if there is weather or traffic or something else that you'll have to deal with."

The places Bidwill travels are often NFL-related. There are meetings to attend, road games to make. The Cardinals have existed as a football team since 1898 and were an inaugural member of the NFL in 1920; the 2022 season was the 90th year (and 91st season) since the franchise has

After 13 seasons as team president, Michael Bidwill became the Arizona Cardinals owner in 2019 upon the passing of his father, Bill. The Cardinals have been in the Bidwill family since 1933, when Michael's grandfather, Charles, purchased the team for $50,000.

Courtesy of the Arizona Cardinals

Bidwill greets Cardinals fans outside State Farm Stadium before a 2021 regular-season contest. Bidwill was a driving force behind the approval and construction of the stadium, which opened in 2006 and is hosting its third Super Bowl.

Courtesy of the Arizona Cardinals

been in the Bidwill family after it was bought by Charles Bidwill – Michael's grandfather.

There remain a handful of franchises that have been family-owned for years, although the business has evolved. And for Michael Bidwill, the boy who learned to fly, there are easy parallels to see between piloting a plane and running an NFL franchise.

"For me, you're going to have to make good decisions, you have to have sound judgment, but at the end of the day, you can't stop running the team," Bidwill says. "You've got to keep being the leader, even if there is turbulent weather here and there."

"I LOVE GETTING A CHANCE TO UNDERSTAND ALL THE BUSINESS. IT'S AN EXTREMELY COMPLEX BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY, AND IT'S CONSTANTLY EVOLVING. I LOVE BEING INVOLVED IN AND HELPING SHAPE THE FUTURE OF THE NFL."

— ARIZONA CARDINALS TEAM OWNER MICHAEL BIDWILL

Only the Bears (Halas/McCaskey) and the Giants (Mara) have been owned by a family for longer than the Cardinals and the Bidwills, with the Steelers (Rooney) equals.

It is a source of pride for Michael Bidwill.

"I'm friends with and work closely with John Mara, Art Rooney, and George McCaskey," he says. "We talk about it. Having that multigenerational view, you try to take the long view of what is best for the game and what is best for the league going forward, not necessarily what's just best for your team or this year. What's best to grow the game."

Charles Bidwill – after helping George Halas financially to keep the Bears – bought the Chicago Cardinals franchise for $50,000 in 1933. When Charles passed away in 1947, eight months before the team captured the NFL championship, his widow, Violet, became the first female to own a professional sports franchise. Under Violet, her two sons – Stormy and Bill – just reaching adulthood, took roles with the team.

"She shaped my father's life in a very meaningful way," Michael says of his grandmother, whom he never met. "He grew up with a woman owner of the team, and he didn't look at women any differently than men and didn't look at color of skin or diversity, equity, or inclusion as anything besides normal. He was way ahead of his time."

The Cardinals moved to St. Louis in 1960, and the brothers took over the team following Violet's passing two years later. In 1972, Bill bought out his brother. Over the decades, the Cardinals became a family affair for Bill, wife Nancy, and their five children.

"I always felt supported on and off the field in my 17 years with the Cardinals," future Hall of Fame wide receiver Larry Fitzgerald says.

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Courtesy of the Arizona Cardinals

Bidwill chats with Cardinals QB Kyler Murray prior to a game at SoFi Stadium. Murray, the No. 1 overall selection in the 2019 NFL Draft, is a two-time Pro Bowl selection and led Arizona to the playoffs in 2021.

"Whether I was visiting hospitals with (Michael's sister) Nicole on a day off or having lunch with (his brother) Tim getting recommendations on motors for restored cars, I felt I was always a valued member of the Cardinals family."

Michael Bidwill always felt like he'd have a role with the team, but after getting his law degree, there was a time when he thought that would be his career path.

Then Bill Bidwill asked his son to head up the drive to build a stadium and the voting approval it would need. At the time, Michael wasn't sure if that meant only a temporary leave from the law – but the stadium was approved, and then built, and by then, it was clear Michael's future was with the franchise, and not long after, the Bidwill who would ultimately take over for Bill.

"He turned more and more authority over to me, and I was blessed to have him as a boss," Michael says. "It was a great honor to work for him. I learned a lot. He was super principled, had tremendous honor and honesty, was direct, a man of few words. Just a good person.

"It was good to see how he handled tough times, when people were attacking him or the team or the stadium, whatever it might be. It was always good to have him as a role model when it came to adversity."

It isn't just the football team that drives Bidwill. He sees the high profile of the NFL team as a virtue that allows him to work with other business leaders and elected officials in what has grown into the 14th-most populated state. He wants to bring mega-events to State Farm Stadium – the Super Bowl and the NCAA Final Four most prominent among them – to aid an area his entire family has called home since 1988.

Yet he is often found in his office at the Dignity Health Training Center in Tempe where the Cardinals call home, working on various parts of the organization as well.

Bidwill's love for the NFL goes beyond his own franchise. He chairs two NFL committees – Conduct and Stadium Security & Fan Behavior – as well as serving on eight others.

"I love getting a chance to understand all the business," Bidwill says. "It's an extremely complex business and industry, and it's constantly evolving. I love being involved in helping shape the future of the NFL."

Evolution has been crucial in-house, too. Once Michael was able to spearhead the stadium's construction – which was voted on in 2000 and came online in 2006 – he eventually oversaw a makeover of the Tempe complex that included building a practice bubble to deal with the Arizona heat as well as a new-look cafeteria, locker room, and weight room.

The size of the organization also has grown significantly since he took over, in a quest to improve all facets of the team.

"Through the years, I have been lucky to watch Michael follow the leadership of his father, Bill, taking the Cardinals to new heights," says Fitzgerald, who was drafted in 2004 and played through the 2020 season. "From the new stadium, making improvements to the training facilities in Tempe, and building competitive teams, his dedication to growth and success greatly improved the fan experience and on-field performance of the team."

It hasn't been enough, not yet. The Cardinals suffered through a difficult 2022 season, with injuries across the offense – including Murray suffering a torn ACL. But Bidwill knows what can happen when things goes right.

One of his best moments came when he was able to see his father hold aloft the Halas Trophy for winning the NFC championship after the 2008 season, a mountain he'd like to climb again – and more often. The Cardinals came close to winning that Super Bowl (XLIII), and Bidwill aches to get that chance again.

Any pilot always wants to soar higher when given the opportunity.

"I'd like to have more on-field success, no question," says Bidwill, whose Cardinals have been to the postseason four times since their Super Bowl appearance and won a franchise-record 13 games in 2015. "We've wanted to get much further in the playoffs.

"But with our quarterback (Murray) in place, and putting other pieces in place, I think we can get there."

Darren Urban *is the senior writer for azcardinals.com and just completed his 23rd season covering the team. His wife, Kris, and sons Alec and Aric have been kind in letting him work this job for so long.*

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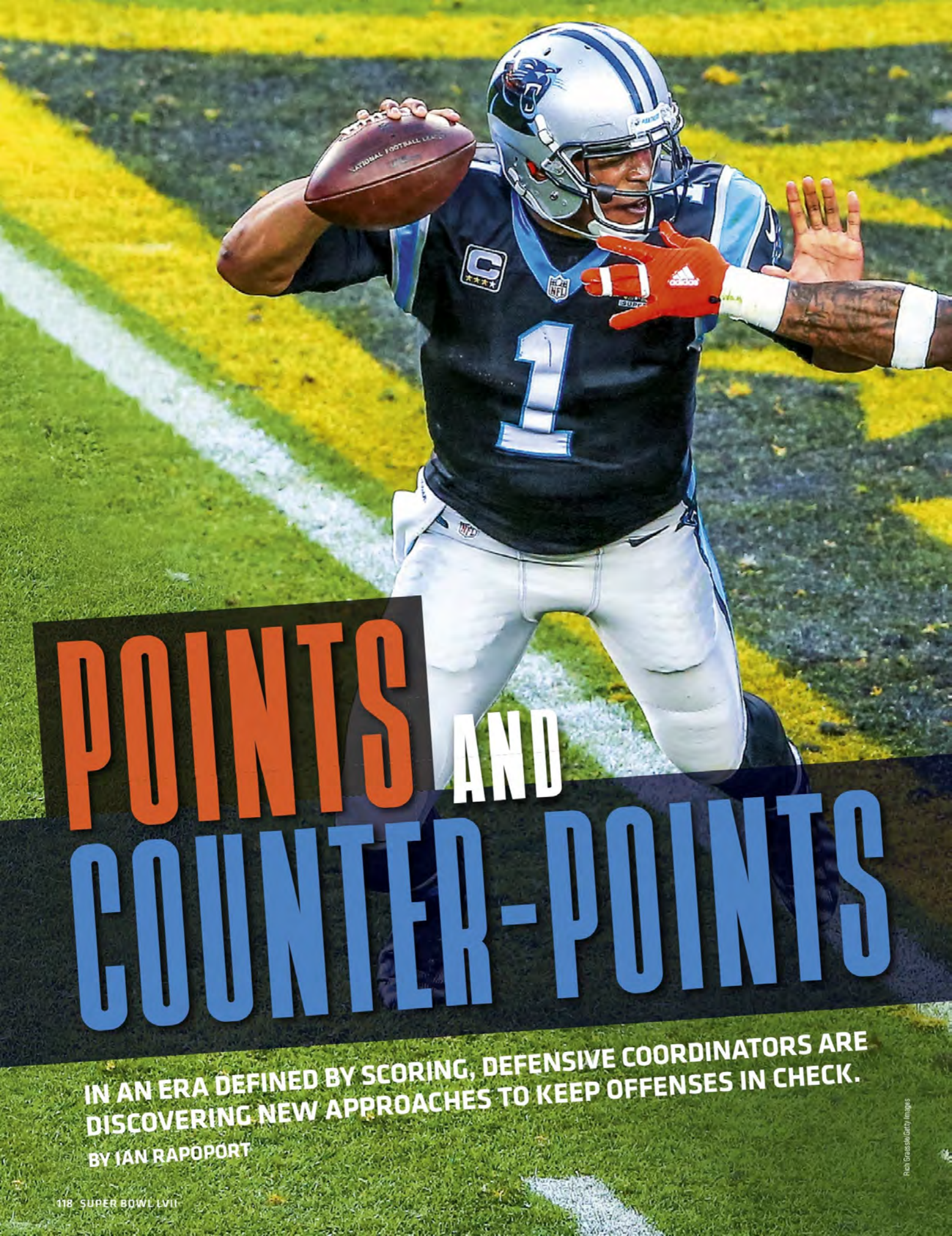


POINTS AND COUNTER-POINTS

IN AN ERA DEFINED BY SCORING, DEFENSIVE COORDINATORS ARE DISCOVERING NEW APPROACHES TO KEEP OFFENSES IN CHECK.

BY IAN RAPOPORT

Rich Graessle/Getty Images

Linebacker Von Miller (58) is the most recent defensive player to win the Rozelle Award as Super Bowl MVP. He had six tackles, including 2.5 sacks, and forced two fumbles that set up Broncos touchdowns in the team's 24-10 victory over Carolina in Super Bowl 50.

Julio Cortez/AP Images

Jason Behnken/AP Images

EVERY GRIZZLED VETERAN HAS HEARD the saying throughout his career, a mantra that has served either as motivation, a statement of fact, or somewhere in between. Defense wins championships.

No one is quite sure how it rose to become gospel, with some noting how legendary Alabama coach Paul "Bear" Bryant used it frequently on TV during his career and others mentioning that basketball superstar Michael Jordan was fond of the phrase, taking it into the mainstream.

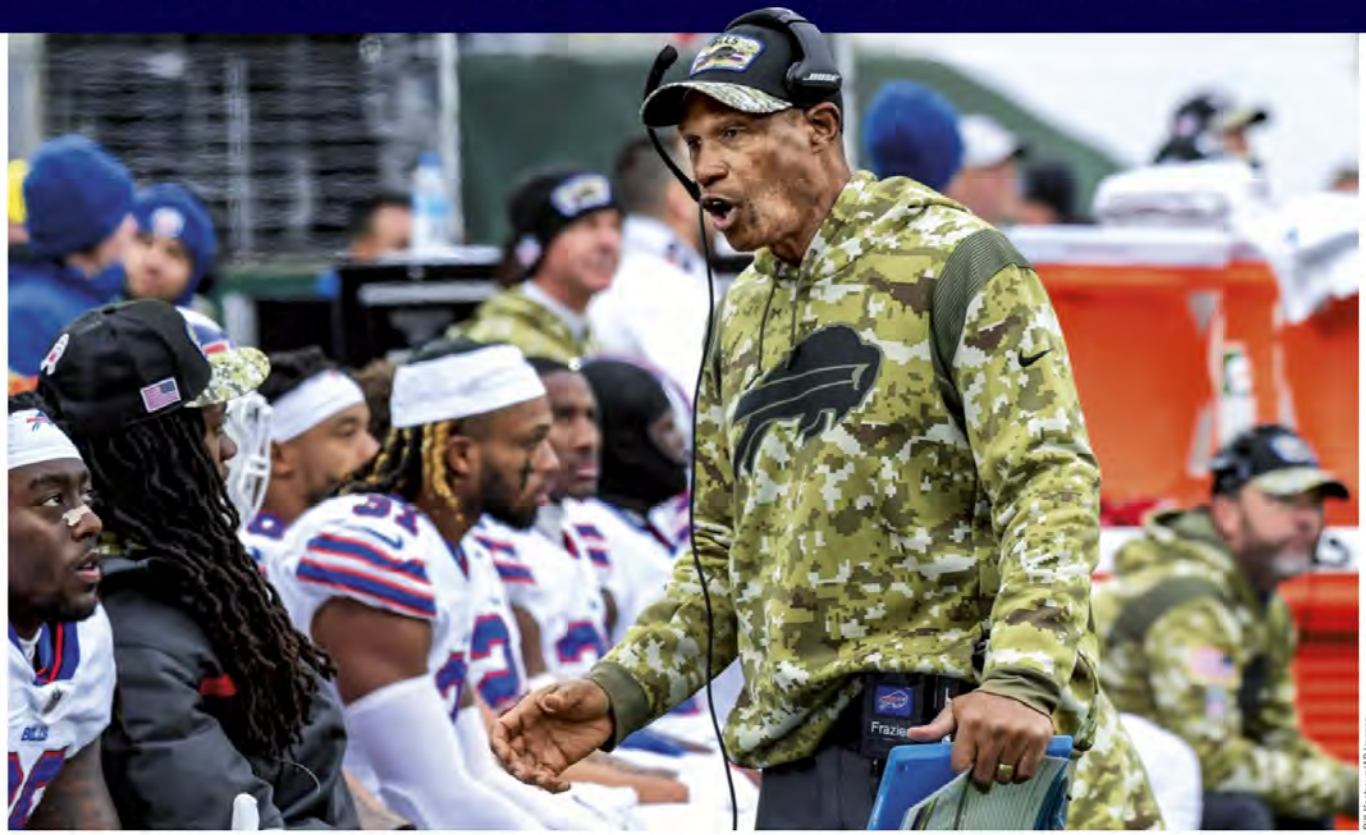
More importantly, is it still true? In today's NFL, does defense win championships?

"It's getting harder," says Bills defensive coordinator Leslie Frazier. "The way things have evolved …."

Frazier, whose units led the NFL in fewest points allowed and fewest yards per game in 2021 and is one of the league's best at what he does, knows the reality. A coaching veteran of more than three decades and a Super Bowl champion as a player and a coach, Frazier understands as well as anyone that the game is now geared toward offense. Rules changes, influences from the college game, and a variety of other factors have made it so.

The smashmouth football of the 1970s is long gone. Schemes have changed, personnel has changed, and evaluations have changed. When the Patriots and Eagles combined to set the NFL record for total offense – for a regular-season or playoff game – in Super Bowl LII, it was all there for the world to see. So, does defense still win championships?

Rams defensive lineman Aaron Donald (99) wraps up Bengals QB Joe Burrow during Super Bowl LVI. Donald had seven tackles, two sacks, and three quarterback hits in the Rams' win. Buccaneers linebacker Devin White (45) makes the call after forcing an incomplete pass to Chiefs tight end Travis Kelce (87) in Super Bowl LV. Leslie Frazier has seen numerous changes in the NFL since his days as a member of the Bears' Super Bowl XX champions and through years of coaching, the last three as the Bills' defensive coordinator.



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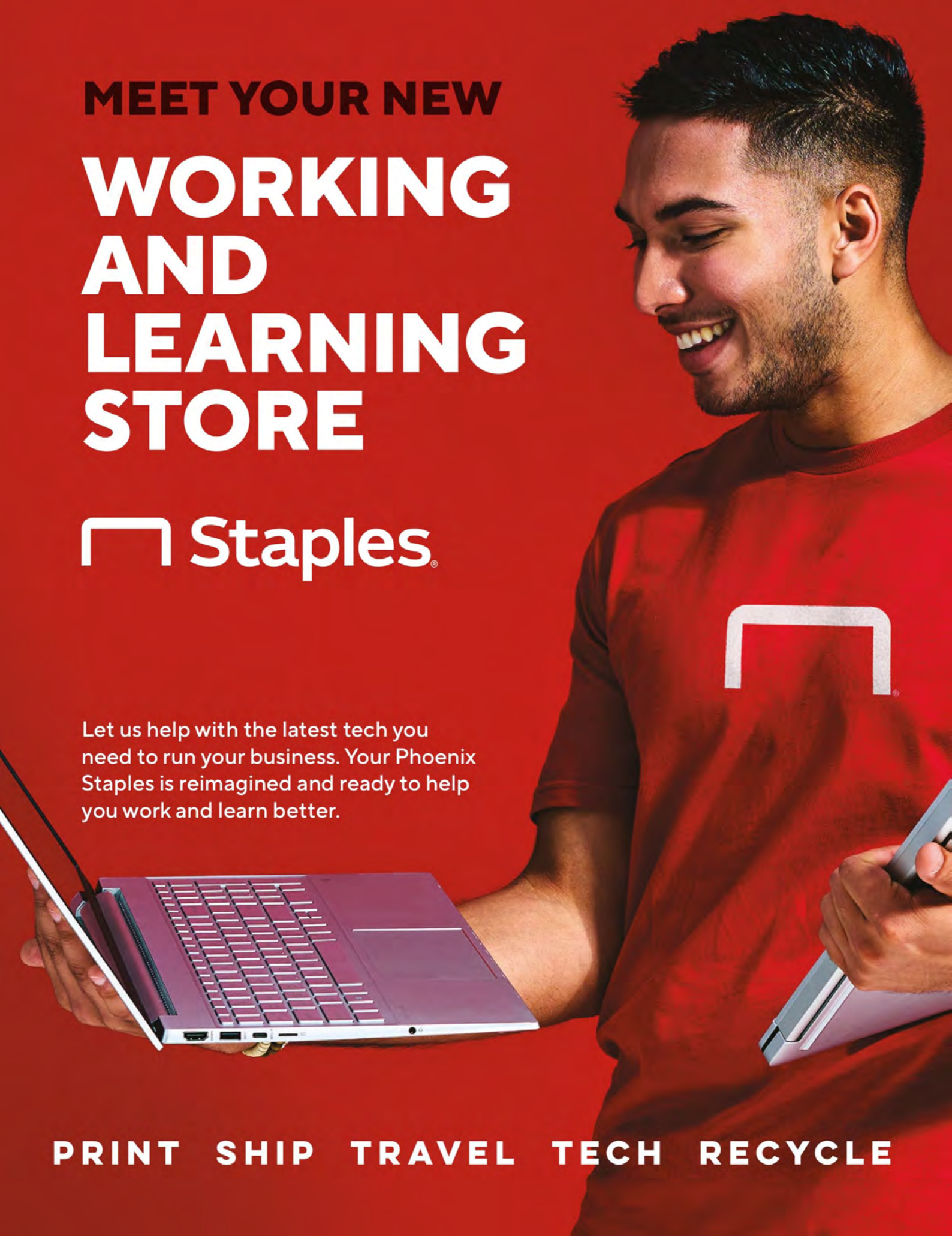
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The Steelers' T.J. Watt (90) brings down Ravens quarterback Lamar Jackson during a 2021 contest. Watt was named the NFL's 2021 Defensive Player of the Year after he tied an NFL record with 22 sacks.

Jeff Roberson/AP Images

"I believe it does," Frazier says. "It's not as black and white as it once was like when I played. Because now, man, you got to score. There aren't many 10-9 games. Those days are so rare. QBs are just so, so good on every team."

Five of the last six Super Bowl winners ranked in the top eight in both points per game and passing yards per game, and the 2015 Broncos are the only team since 2010 to win a Super Bowl despite finishing outside the top 10 in points scored (19th). To no one's surprise, the 2020s are on pace to be the highest-scoring decade since the 1970 AFL/NFL merger. From 1970-79, teams averaged 19.2 points per game. By 2010-19, it was 22.6. So far this decade, that number hovers around 24 ppg.

Among the reasons is the way the college game has crept into the NFL, with the spread becoming the norm and running the football a complement rather than a dominant form of offense. Frazier remembers back to his first season as an assistant with the Eagles and facing "The Greatest Show on Turf," when the Rams were taking the world by storm.

"The Rams got it going with that wide-open style, and it seemed like that became more than a trend," Frazier recalls. "We played them in the 1999 playoffs, the year they went on to win Super Bowl XXXIV. You could see that the way they were doing things could be transformative. When the Rams' offense exploded like it did, that was when I thought this might be a change of the guard in the NFL."

It all crystalized in Super Bowl LII, when the Patriots and Eagles racked up 1,151 yards of offense, including 613 by New England. Tom Brady threw for a Super Bowl-record 505 yards in a losing effort. Everything seemed headed one way.

Only it wasn't.

The past few Super Bowls have featured some stellar defense. The Patriots and Rams battled in the lowest-scoring Super Bowl in history. The Chiefs' high-flying, creative offense was then mainly kept in check in Super Bowl LIV (until the game's final minutes when Patrick Mahomes was unleashed on the world). Todd Bowles' Tampa Bay unit completely shut down Kansas City in Super Bowl LV – the Chiefs could only muster three field goals – and both the Rams and Bengals played outstanding defense in last year's game.

So while NFL offenses have gone on a roll, Super Bowl-champion defenses have followed suit. The 2016 Patriots, 2017 Eagles, 2018 Patriots, and 2019 Chiefs all ranked in the top 10 for fewest passing yards allowed. It appears the stellar minds on defense have stepped back and figured it out. Well, as much as possible.

"I kind of fell back on my college days (at Purdue), to be honest," says Bengals defensive coordinator Lou Anarumo. "You use some option football principles, where you got to handle the dive, the pass, the QB, the pitch. The other thing that's totally different is the number of defensive backs you're putting out there at one time. We could have at the very minimum five, and, in a lot of games, six or seven DBs just matching up with the personnel you have to face.

"To say you're just going to cover Darren Waller or Travis Kelce with, forget a linebacker, a safety. Well, he better be a good cover safety and, oh, by the way, if you have a big corner, you better put him [on that receiver]. And now you have guys like that around the league. 'OK, this is your job.'"

The Dolphins' Xavien Howard (25) breaks up a pass intended for Bills wide receiver Stefon Diggs during a 2022 contest. Howard is a two-time NFL interception leader and had a career-high 10 during the 2020 campaign.

Wilfredo Lee/AP Images

The numbers show that change as clear as anything, with defenses altering the way they're configured based on the offenses they're seeing. Per Next Gen Stats, NFL defenses used nickel (five DBs) or dime (six DBs) on 74.3 percent of all plays in 2021, up from 67.6 percent in 2016.

The box safety is becoming antiquated, with Frazier calling it "long gone. The importance of the nickel position, he's a starter now. The way people spread you out with mismatches, your outside linebackers need to have cover ability now. It's made defenses really change because of the evolution of offenses. It's gotten harder for sure."

"There's more spread to the game, there's more space to the game, and there's more speed to the game," says Ed Donatell, who has been a defensive coach in the league for more than 30 years and has coached in three Super Bowls, including with the Broncos when they won back-to-back titles in the 1997 and 1998 seasons. "[The NFL has] adapted the rules so receivers can free release. That puts stress on the defenses. And we've had to adapt in many cases with a linebacker who is a little smaller and a little faster for matchup purposes. That's one more change."

It's far from the only one. With the prevalence of Run-Pass Options (RPOs), defenses now must scheme against quarterbacks who can run and throw with equal proficiency and have the ability to spread the field.

"The college game has come to our game," says Donatell, who points to technology, analytics, and an open mind as critical to defending against these new offenses. "There's just so many more formations that are presented to you than there were in the past, and that's not going away any time soon."

As Anarumo notes, there was a time when teams could line up in a style of defense or scheme and know it was effective against any look. Those times have passed. He sees it twice a year against the Ravens, for instance, and Lamar Jackson.

"Now a lot of teams are featuring an RPO, whereas 10 years ago, that wasn't a thing," Anarumo says. "You got to plan specifically for that. Those things have forced us to adjust some of the old-school thinking of, 'OK, this defense is good against everything.' OK, well maybe it's not. And it's forcing you to have specific RPO plans, empty plans, and QB run schemes."

The Rams and Bengals battled in an even, hard-fought Super Bowl last year, one that again pushed back against the league's ongoing offensive explosion. In fact, before the Rams' winning touchdown drive, the teams combined to punt on seven consecutive possessions, and it was a defensive player – lineman Aaron Donald wrapping his arms around QB Joe Burrow's legs and spinning him down on fourth-and-1 to create an incompletion – that ended Cincinnati's final threat.

But a few weeks earlier, the Chiefs and Bills engaged in an epic offensive battle in the AFC Divisional Playoffs. The game made famous for a 13-second comeback also included a 28-point fourth quarter and 81 total pass attempts for 707 passing yards.

In the final two minutes of regulation alone, there were 221 yards of offense, three touchdown passes, and a game-tying 49-yard field goal. The Chiefs then took the first possession of overtime and drove 75 yards for the game-winning TD. In an era full of offense, offense, and more offense, that was the most indelible example.

> **"THERE'S MORE SPREAD TO THE GAME, THERE'S MORE SPACE TO THE GAME, AND THERE'S MORE SPEED TO THE GAME."**
>
> — ED DONATELL, LONGTIME NFL DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR

Frazier was asked, simply, if this is the way it's going to be.

"I don't know if it'll be the norm, but there are going to be weeks like that," he says, laughing. "I mean, there already are. There already are games where it's back and forth. You see it all the time in college. I wouldn't be surprised if it happens and ramps up a little bit more.

"You have to be able to score now."

That may be the modern NFL, but defensive coaches are proving just as innovative in their efforts to keep points off the board.

Ian Rapoport *is an Insider for NFL Network and NFL.com.*

FIFTY YEARS LATER, THE "IMMACULATE RECEPTION" AND THE DOLPHINS' PERFECT SEASON STILL RESONATE AS PIVOTAL AND HISTORIC MOMENTS IN NFL HISTORY. BY GERRY DULAC

TWO FOR THE BOOKS

THEY INTERSECTED ON AN UNSEASONABLY WARM New Year's Eve day in 1972, two of the most remarkable moments in NFL history passing each other like mall shoppers on an escalator: the greatest play ever and arguably the league's greatest team ever. Oh yeah, and two of the greatest coaches ever.

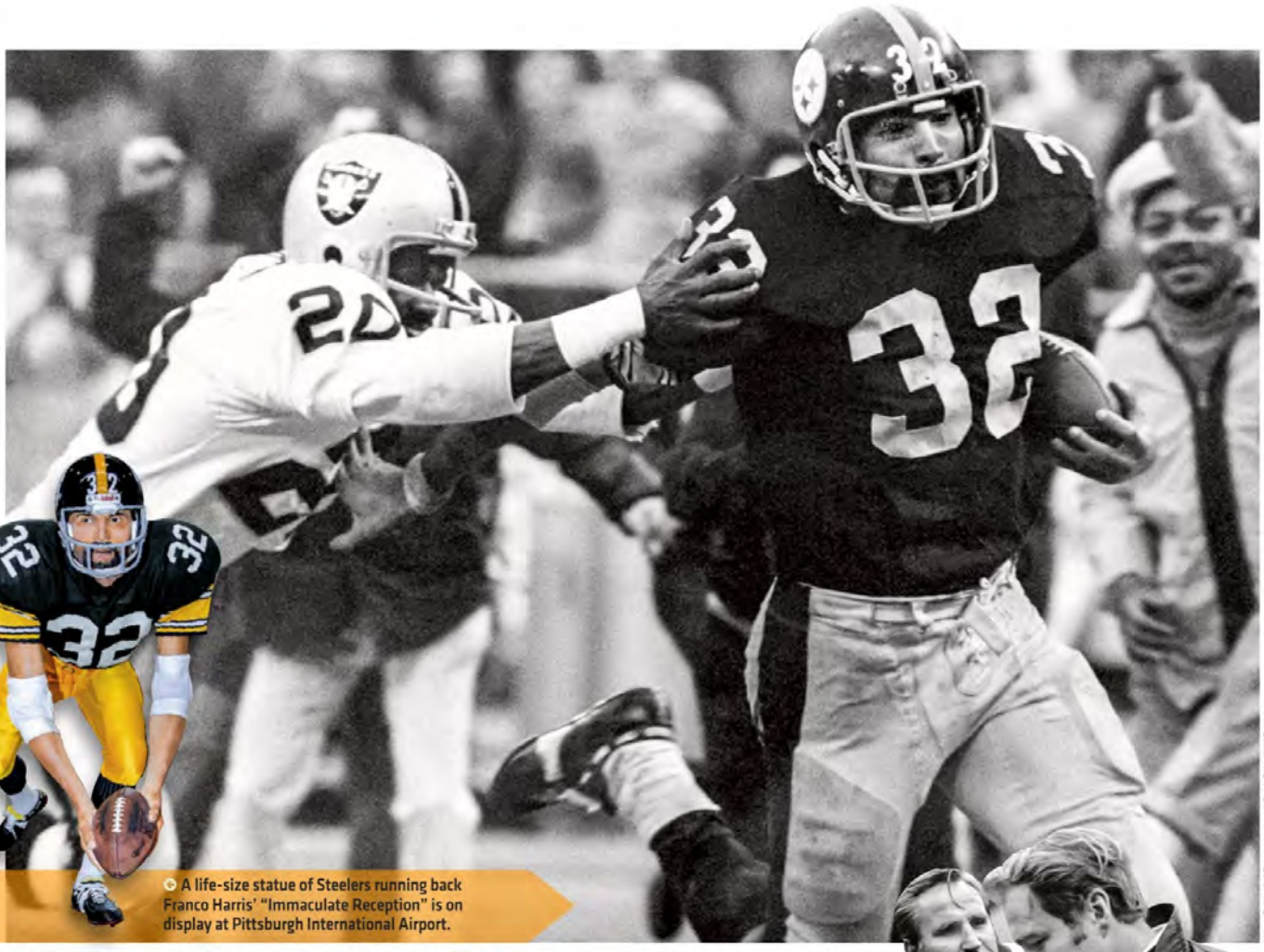
It has been 50 years since the Miami Dolphins posted the only perfect season in NFL history, going 17-0 and capping their spectacular march with a victory over Washington in Super Bowl VII.

To reach that unrivaled place, they had to go to Pittsburgh's Three Rivers Stadium, which was still reverberating from the play eight days earlier that came to be known as the "Immaculate Reception," Franco Harris' touchdown off a deflected pass to stun the Oakland Raiders and miraculously give the Steelers their first playoff win in franchise history.

Even though the Steelers went 11-3 and the Dolphins were 14-0 in the regular season, the AFC Championship Game was in Pittsburgh because the site rotated by division back then (home-field advantage wasn't instituted until 1978). The teams delivered a football moment that, a half-century later, stands above almost anything that happened before or since, given the magnitude of what one team had just done and what the other was about to accomplish. Dolphins coach Don Shula had lost in his first two Super Bowl appearances, the most recent

© Bob Griese (12) prepares for the snap during the Dolphins' Super Bowl VII victory over Washington. The game, which took place 50 years ago, completed the only perfect season in NFL history.

Malcolm Emmons/USA TODAY Sports



Harry Cabluck/AP Images; Inset: Paul Spinelli/AP Image

A life-size statue of Steelers running back Franco Harris' "Immaculate Reception" is on display at Pittsburgh International Airport.

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Top: Franco Harris (32) eludes the Raiders' Jimmy Warren on his way to the end zone with the "Immaculate Reception" that delivered the Steelers their first-ever playoff victory.
Jim Kiick lunges for a touchdown to put the Dolphins ahead in their 1972 AFC title game win over the Steelers.
Above: Before being on opposite sidelines, Dolphins coach Don Shula (left) and Steelers coach Chuck Noll were teammates with the Browns and coached together with the Colts.

just a year earlier in 1971. Now, trying to get back for the second year in a row, he had to get past his protégé, Chuck Noll, whom he had recommended the Steelers hire as their head coach in 1969. Noll had served on Shula's staff in Baltimore, and the two had ties dating back to the 1950s when they both played for the Cleveland Browns. Shula used to call Noll "Knute Knowledge," after legendary Notre Dame coach Knute Rockne, because he was so intelligent.

"His recommendation to my grandfather and father was a key to hiring Chuck Noll," Steelers president Art Rooney II said when Shula died in May 2020.

Storylines were everywhere, lying there like a soup bone waiting for a Doberman to retrieve it.

The Dolphins were greeted with a spring-like day in Pittsburgh, 63 degrees and sunny. It would be easy to say fate, even destiny, appeared

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Tight end Jim Mandich hauls in a 19-yard reception to set up the Dolphins' second touchdown in their Super Bowl VII victory over Washington. Dolphins safety Jake Scott (13) intercepted two passes – one of those in the end zone – en route to Super Bowl VII MVP honors. The Miami defense didn't allow a point in the game; Washington's lone score came on a fumble that was returned for a touchdown.

to be on their side. But given what had transpired a week earlier, how could anyone pick against the Steelers?

Known for decades as the "Lovable Losers" – they had posted just seven winning records since their charitable and beloved owner Art Rooney Sr. founded the franchise in 1933 – the Steelers were at the beginnings of their run as one of the most dominant teams in NFL history, winning four Super Bowls in a six-year period, beginning in 1974. Ten players from those teams, along with Noll, are now in the Pro Football Hall of Fame, including the two main principals of the Immaculate Reception: quarterback Terry Bradshaw and a rookie running back from Penn State who was the leader of a growing fan club known as Franco's Italian Army.

"What makes it special is this is the first playoff victory for the Steelers ever, the first touchdown in Steelers playoff history, and the first touchdown for both Terry Bradshaw and myself in Steelers playoff history," said Harris, who passed away in December just days prior to the 50th anniversary of that play, voted No. 1 by NFL Films is a series celebrating the league's 100th season. "That play carried a lot of weight [because it was] the first of so many things. The most important thing is, we found a way to win. That stayed with us for the rest of the decade."

Sadly, the person who most deserved to embrace the incredible moment was the one who missed the play. Thinking the outcome was decided (after the Raiders took a late 7-6 lead), Rooney left the press box to head to the locker room to be with his players. "The Chief" was on the stadium elevator when Harris snatched the deflected pass just before it hit the turf and raced 42 yards for the game-winning score. He heard the roar and was told what happened when he got off.

"We were winning and then, all of a sudden, with a minute or so to go, we're losing," Harris said. "And, once again, Mr. Rooney gets on an elevator to go down to the locker room to console us because, through

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In 2013, the '72 Dolphins were honored by President Barack Obama in the East Room of the White House. As part of the ceremony, the team presented Obama – flanked by Bob Griese (left) and Don Shula – with a signed jersey.
NFL Commissioner Pete Rozelle (left) awards the Lombardi Trophy to Steelers owner Art Rooney following the team's Super Bowl IX victory over the Vikings. It was the first of four Super Bowl titles that Pittsburgh would win during a six-year span in the 1970s.

his history, the Steelers had always found a way to lose. Here it is again – we're winning and, right at the end, we're losing."

Only this time it was different.

"When he got off the elevator," Harris said, "we had found a way to win."

But the magic couldn't sustain itself for another week.

The Dolphins were coming off a first-round playoff victory against the Cleveland Browns that kept their unbeaten record intact. To get to this point, though, they had the benefit of a soft schedule, the third-easiest in the modern era. As it were, they didn't play a team with a winning record during the regular season.

Still, their perfect season nearly ended in Week 3 in Minnesota. Trailing, 14-6, in the fourth quarter, it took Garo Yepremian's 51-yard field goal and QB Bob Griese's surprise 3-yard touchdown pass to backup tight end Jim Mandich with 1:28 remaining to pull out a 16-14 victory.

"Late in the game, we got down inside the 10-yard line, and I know they think we're going to run with Larry Csonka because we always run with Csonka when we get [in those situations]," Griese recalls. "So I call '119 split delay,' and the delay is Mandich over on the left side. Sure enough, they send 11 guys to stop the run and Mandich is sitting there waiting for the ball. That's the closest we ever came to losing a ballgame."

One week after the Immaculate Reception, the Dolphins came up with the Immaculate Deception against the Steelers: a trick play by punter Larry Seiple, who ran 37 yards on a fake punt early in the second quarter to set up a touchdown that tied the game at 7-7.

"I remember standing down on the sideline and hearing Steelers fans screaming, 'Turn around!'" says Csonka, the Hall of Fame running back who combined with backfield mate Mercury Morris to rush for 144 yards against Pittsburgh's Steel Curtain defense.

"We had position, momentum, everything when that happened," Noll said after the game. "That changed the game."

While Seiple's run gave the Dolphins a spark, they still needed more from their offense. At halftime, with the score tied, Shula made "one of the toughest decisions I ever had to make in my coaching career" and benched quarterback Earl Morrall, who went 10-0 as a starter that season after stepping in for Griese, who had suffered a broken leg and dislocated ankle in a Week 5 game against the Chargers.

The move had immediate results. Griese's 52-yard completion to receiver Paul Warfield set up the first of two touchdowns by running back Jim Kiick, allowing the Dolphins to erase a 10-7 deficit. And while the Steelers answered with a late TD, it wasn't enough, as the still-perfect Dolphins left town with a 21-17 victory.

One week later, perfection was achieved – a place in NFL history that no other team has occupied to this day. Led by Csonka's 112 rushing yards, 17 tackles from defensive lineman Manny Fernandez, and two interceptions by game MVP Jake Scott, the Dolphins defeated Washington, 14-7, in Super Bowl VII.

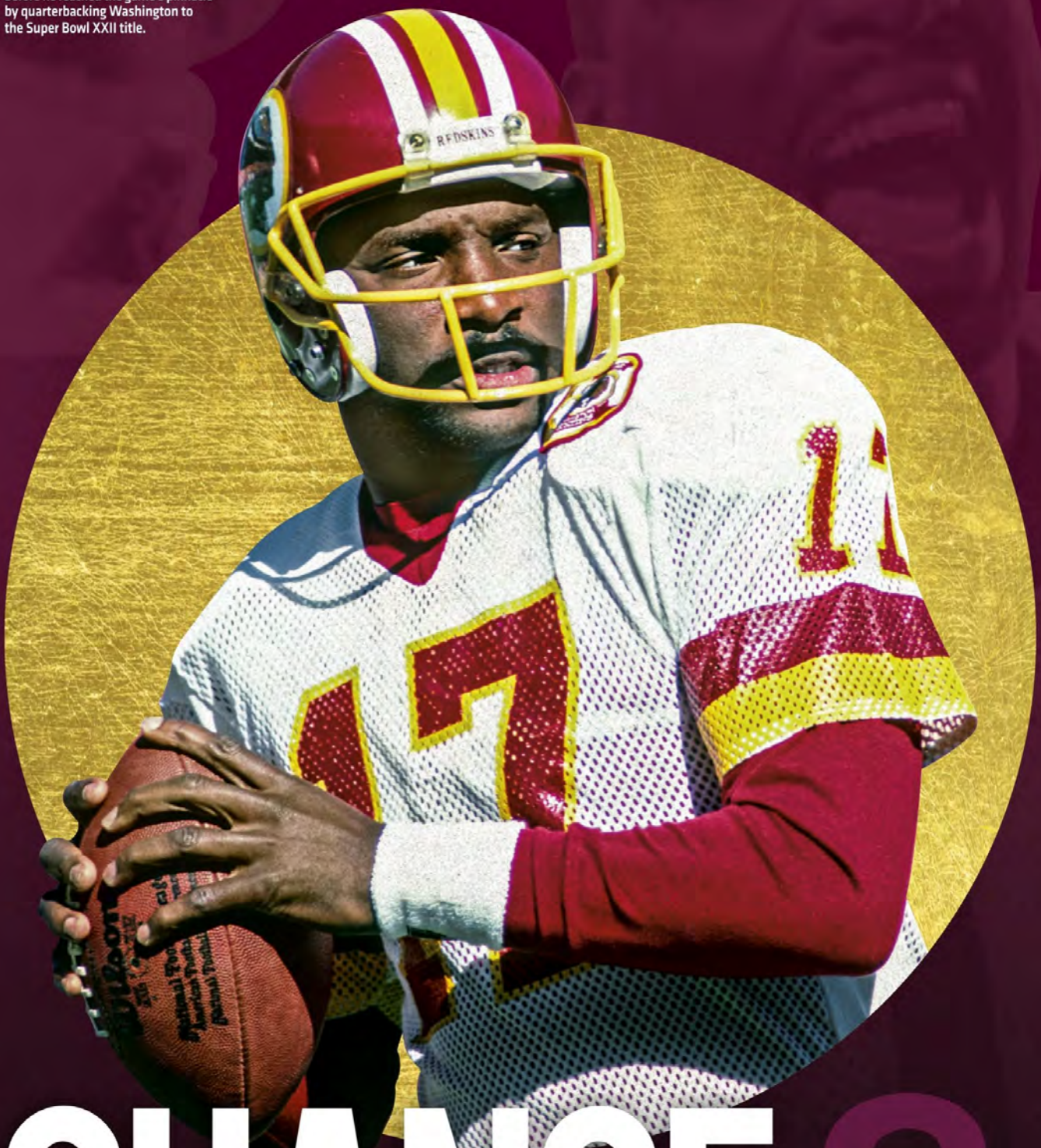
Defensive end Vern Den Herder, who sacked Billy Kilmer to end the game, remembers laying on top of the quarterback when it hit him what the Dolphins had just accomplished.

"Bill Stanfill and I, we had Kilmer on the ground, we realized it was the ending play of the game and we're laying there, and we're congratulating each other on top of Kilmer," Den Herder says. "The referee had to come over and remind us to let him up. It was the realization it was over, a year-long goal."

The Dolphins defended their title by beating the Vikings in Super Bowl VIII. And while that allowed them to become the second team to win back-to-back Super Bowls, that 17-0 season remains their crowning achievement. That their path intersected with the greatest play in NFL history is, 50 years later, a golden anniversary present unlike any other.

"One time, one place in the universe, one space, was occupied by perfection," Csonka says. "And we got to be a part of it. And I'm damn proud I got to be a part of it."

Gerry Dulac *is a sportswriter for the* Pittsburgh Post-Gazette *who has covered the Steelers and the NFL since 1992. He has been a member of the Steelers Radio Network since 1997.*



Doug Williams' career took him to Tampa Bay and then the USFL before he reached the game's pinnacle by quarterbacking Washington to the Super Bowl XXII title.

CHANGE&

FOR SOME QUARTERBACKS, A FRESH START AND AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHINE HAVE BEEN THE PERFECT FORMULA TO ACHIEVE SUPER BOWL SUCCESS.

BY JEFFRI CHADIHA

THE LAST PERSON DOUG WILLIAMS EXPECTED TO SEE after Super Bowl XXII – as he limped off the field following Washington's 42-10 rout of the Denver Broncos – was his old college football coach at Grambling, Eddie Robinson.

Nobody had informed Williams that Robinson would be in the crowd that day. Then their eyes met across the field, as hundreds of people milled around them. Within seconds, both men felt tears streaming down their cheeks as the significance of the moment engulfed them.

Williams had produced countless impressive feats, from throwing for a Super Bowl-record 340 yards and a game-record-tying four touchdowns to becoming the first Black starting quarterback to win an NFL championship. None of those accomplishments came up when his old coach hugged him fondly. Instead, Robinson praised his former player for overcoming a first-quarter knee injury.

"He didn't say anything about the touchdowns," Williams says. "He was just happy that I got up and kept playing."

Robinson understood the historic opportunity Williams faced in that Super Bowl. As much as Williams exhibited what men of color could accomplish at the position, he also revealed what can happen when quarterbacks find new surroundings. He had been a first-round pick of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and a star quarterback in the United States Football League before signing with Washington in 1986. By the end of his second year with the franchise, Williams had proven that he could lead a team to glorious heights after enduring his fair share of adversity.

It's a story that's more common than one may imagine. Jim Plunkett won two Super Bowls with the Raiders a decade after the New England Patriots made him the first overall pick in the 1971 draft. Brad Johnson played for Minnesota and Washington before leading the Buccaneers to a championship in the 2002 season. The list also includes Hall of Famers (San Francisco's Steve Young and Green Bay's Brett Favre), other former first-round picks (Baltimore's Trent Dilfer) and, most recently, Matthew Stafford, who led the Los Angeles Rams to a win over Cincinnati in Super Bowl LVI after 12 seasons with the Lions.

All these men thrived because they were strong-willed and landed in the right places at the right times.

"I can appreciate what all those guys went through because I experienced it myself," says Plunkett, who was behind center for the Raiders when they captured Super Bowls XV and XVIII. "It was a tough road for most of those guys. Some players can walk right in and have that kind of success right away, and Tom Brady is a great example of that. But it's really hard to get to that game, let alone win it. I know because I was at a point where I was ready to retire before it happened for me."

Plunkett joined the Raiders at the lowest point of his career. The Patriots gave up on him after he sustained a shoulder injury in his fifth year and the team turned to a more run-oriented offense. The 49ers traded for him and then released him after two seasons. Raiders owner Al Davis eventually gave Plunkett a shot – the quarterback signed as a backup in 1978 and became the starter five weeks into the 1980 season, after Dan Pastorini sustained a fractured leg – along with some crucial career advice.

"He told me you don't have to do everything here," Plunkett recalls. "We'll surround you with people who will help you do the job."

Johnson felt a similar vibe when he signed as a free agent with Tampa Bay in 2001. He'd also battled injuries during a productive career and picked the Buccaneers largely because he knew head coach Tony Dungy when Dungy was an assistant with the Vikings. When the Bucs fired Dungy after that first season and traded for new head coach Jon Gruden, Johnson called one of Gruden's former players in Oakland, quarterback Rich Gannon, for reassurance.

"Rich told me he had so much respect for Jon," Johnson says. "He told me I would be prepared, gameday ready, and that I would like playing for him. That helped me moving forward."

Both Plunkett and Johnson echo a sentiment that's critical for any veteran quarterback moving into a new situation with a talented team: It's vital to find a place where people can maximize one's talent. In fact, Williams had his own supportive figure in Washington after the USFL folded in 1985.

Head coach Joe Gibbs had a strong history with Williams, as he was

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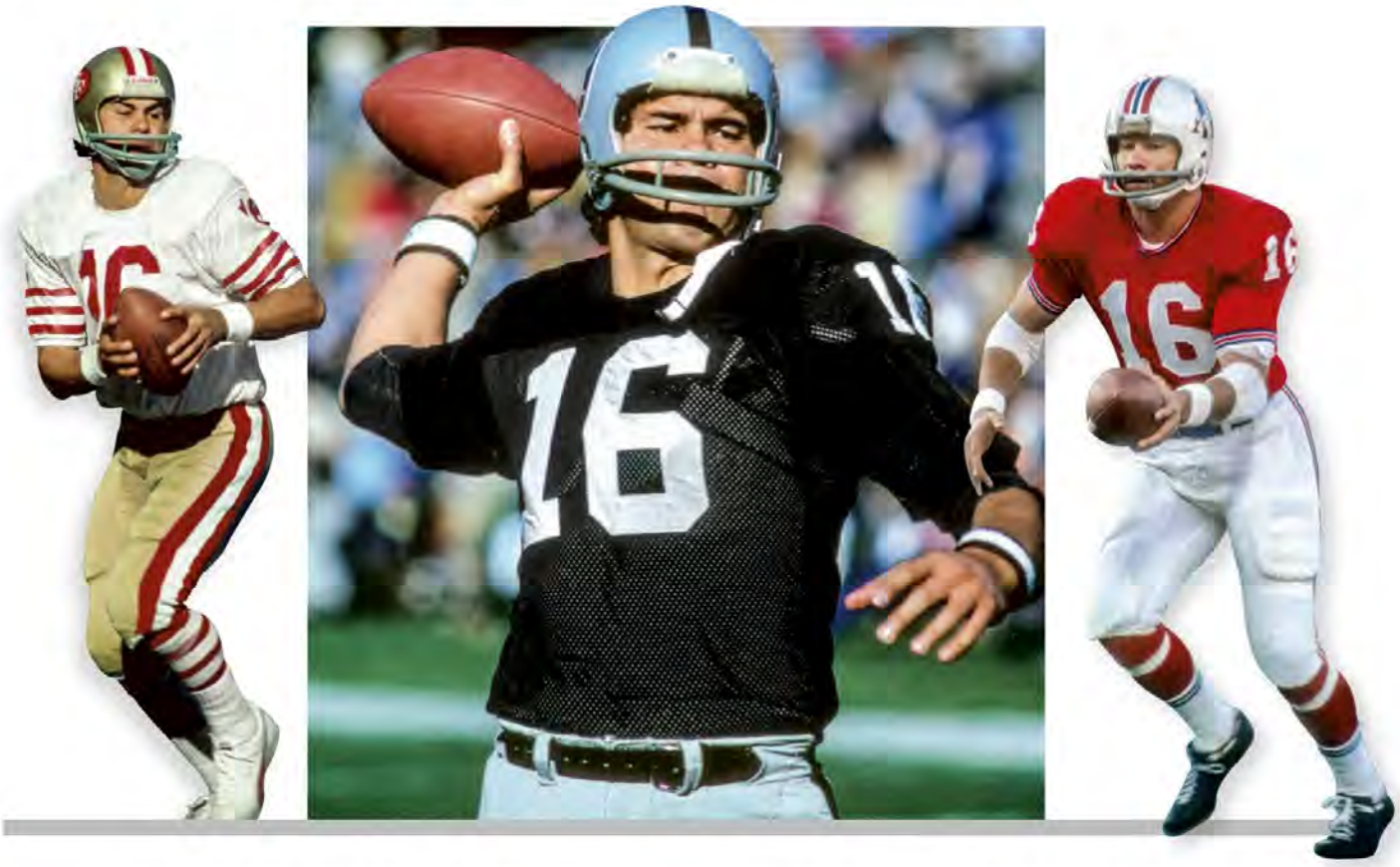
CHAMPIONSHIPS



"IT'S REALLY HARD TO GET TO [THE SUPER BOWL], LET ALONE WIN IT. I KNOW BECAUSE I WAS AT A POINT WHERE I WAS READY TO RETIRE BEFORE IT HAPPENED FOR ME." — JIM PLUNKETT

the Buccaneers' offensive coordinator when they drafted the quarterback in 1978. Williams spent many nights during his rookie season eating dinner with Gibbs' family and then studying the team's offense afterward with the assistant coach.

The bond meant plenty when Gibbs called about signing Williams to back up Jay Schroeder.

"I loved Coach Gibbs when we were together in Tampa," says Williams, who played five seasons there, highlighted by a trip to the 1979 NFC Championship Game. "But I also knew no other team in the NFL wanted me. He was the only one who called."

Williams hadn't reached the point where, as in Plunkett's case, retirement was a viable consideration. He wasn't even willing to think he couldn't still play at a high level.

"I agreed to be the backup because Jay Schroeder was the starter. That was going to be my role. But I didn't have to look at myself as somebody who couldn't be a starter. I just didn't have that mentality. So my big thing was to be prepared for whenever my opportunity came."

Williams thought that chance was coming prior to the start of the 1987 season. Plunkett had retired from the Raiders, prompting Al Davis to call about a trade for Williams. Washington had just played a preseason game when general manager Bobby Beathard had agreed to the deal. Williams was thrilled about finally moving to a spot where he could lead an NFL team again … right before he learned that Gibbs vetoed the swap.

That decision left Williams fuming. He didn't feel any better after meeting with Gibbs the next day and listening to the explanation.

"He told me he worked for [Washington], not the Raiders," Williams says. "And that he was always going to do what was in the best interest of the team."

Schroeder may have been the starter when that 1987 season began, but Williams continually impressed. He led Washington to a season-opening win over Philadelphia when Schroeder went down with an injury and came off the bench to produce two comeback victories later in the year. Though Washington lost the only two games that Williams started that season, his individual play was so strong that Gibbs gave him the job right before the playoffs began.

It was no different than when Dilfer replaced Tony Banks as the starter in Baltimore and helped the Ravens win 11 of their final 12 games in 2000. Baltimore started the season thinking that Banks could be a difference-maker. However, Dilfer emerged as the better fit, the savvy veteran who had been discarded in Tampa but understood how to manage the offense and rely on one of the best defenses in league history. As Ravens head coach Brian Billick told *Sports Illustrated* after Super Bowl XXXV, that game was "the ultimate example of how football is not about the star quarterback (or) the star running back. It's about team."

Jim Plunkett went through a series of career highs and lows before winning a pair of Super Bowl titles with the Raiders (center). The No. 1 overall pick in the 1971 draft by the Patriots (right), he spent five seasons there before being dealt to the 49ers (left). After signing with the Raiders in 1978, he served as a backup until stepping up to start during the '80 season.

Photos by Getty Images

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Plunkett proved as much in Oakland in 1980. Even though he threw five interceptions while replacing Pastorini in a loss to Kansas City, the other Raiders rallied around him. Future Hall of Fame guard Gene Upshaw even exhorted his offensive linemates to pick up their blocking so Plunkett could have a couple extra seconds to throw. The Raiders ultimately won 13 of their last 15 games while becoming the first wild card team to walk away with the Lombardi Trophy.

Johnson helped the Bucs find their own momentum, but he added that good fortune was an underrated element of his success. He was battling bruised ribs that forced him to miss the final two weeks of the regular season, but as Johnson says, "(Backup) Rob Johnson helped us get the win in the last game of the year, and then Green Bay lost to the Jets. So that helped us get the bye and gave me a little more time to recover. You need things like that to happen when you're trying to win a championship."

Trent Dilfer (8) began his career in Tampa Bay, but found Super Bowl success as a member of the 2000 Ravens. Brad Johnson was a ninth-round pick by the Vikings and started both there and in Washington before winning Super Bowl XXXVII with the Bucs. After 12 years in Detroit, former No. 1 overall pick Matthew Stafford was traded to the Rams, where he quarterbacked them to the Super Bowl LVI title.

Williams got his own break when he slipped on the field inside San Diego's Jack Murphy Stadium in Super Bowl XXII. He already had been dealing with the discomfort of a six-hour root canal that had been performed a day earlier. But then he dropped back to pass late in the first quarter, settled in to throw, and felt his right leg slip forward as his left leg twisted awkwardly underneath him. It was the kind of unsettling moment that could've destroyed a dream – until Williams responded with that record-setting effort.

He threw all four of his touchdown passes in the second quarter, which set a Super Bowl record for most scoring throws in a single half, let alone a quarter. Williams' 80-yard touchdown pass to Ricky Sanders tied Plunkett's Super Bowl standard for the longest play from scrimmage (Favre broke that mark in Super Bowl XXXI). The final score reinforced everything Williams thought about that team.

"I always just told myself to go out and play the best you can," he says. "We had the best offensive line in the NFL, great receivers, and a defense that had Dexter Manley, Charles Mann, and Darrell Green. We had everything we needed."

Most of the talk coming out of that game justifiably centered on Williams making history. Now more than three decades removed, it's also clear that he joined a unique group that deserves its own

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Top: Tom Brady (12) won six Super Bowls with the Patriots before signing with Tampa Bay and teaming up with fellow former Patriot Rob Gronkowski (87) for his seventh crown. Above: Peyton Manning (18) etched his name into history by becoming the first starting QB to win Super Bowl titles with two teams – XLI (left, with coach Tony Dungy) as a member of the Colts and 50 while playing for the Broncos (right).

spotlight today. Maybe that's because the times are changing so quickly. Franchise quarterbacks used to spend their entire careers with one team, but now they're moving around with increasing frequency.

Brady has lifted the Lombardi Trophy with both New England and Tampa Bay. Peyton Manning did the same with Indianapolis and Denver. Stafford delivered on all the hopes the Rams had after making that trade in March 2021. Another Super Bowl-winning quarterback, Russell Wilson, moved from Seattle to Denver via a trade last offseason. The one thing that hasn't changed with the position is how much it can impact a quarterback's legacy when you have a Super Bowl ring to place on your finger.

"This game can teach us so much as people," Stafford said after throwing for 283 yards and three touchdowns in Super Bowl LVI. "I get to go to work with people from all walks of life, come together, and go for one goal. For 12 years, that goal wasn't reached. It tore me up inside, but I knew I could keep playing and try to find a way."

Johnson agrees, as he still can vividly recall everything about that day he won with Tampa, from the closed highways on the ride to the game to Celine Dion singing the national anthem to the confetti falling on the field as a song from one of his favorite bands, The Outfield, blared through the stadium speakers at the game's conclusion.

"It's in that moment that you realize you're on the best team in the world, and you get to feel like the best quarterback in the world," Johnson says. "For one day in your life, you get to feel that."

Jeffri Chadiha *is a senior columnist for NFL.com and an on-air talent for NFL Network. He has won a Sports Emmy and co-authored a book with Hall of Fame wide receiver Cris Carter,* Going Deep: How Wide Receivers Became the Most Compelling Figures in Pro Sports.

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Legacy of Leadership

FOR 19 YEARS, THE PAT TILLMAN FOUNDATION HAS HELPED SCHOLARS ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS AND IMPROVE THE WORLD AROUND THEM.

BY KENT SOMERS

PEOPLE WHO LEAVE BEHIND ENDURING legacies after their deaths tend not to live their lives with that as a goal. Their selflessness is one reason we admire and emulate them.

There's no greater example of that than Pat Tillman.

He didn't turn down a $3.6 million contract from the Cardinals in 2002 in order to enlist in the Army because he wanted attention. He declined all interviews, preferring that everyone look somewhere other than his direction.

But nearly 19 years after his death, Tillman's name and his legacy endure and thrive. His name is on a bridge, a charitable foundation, a middle school, a community run, and a veteran's center. There are statues of him at Sun Devil Stadium, where he played for Arizona State, and at State Farm Stadium, the Cardinals' home and site of Super Bowl LVII.

Thousands of fans own ASU and Cardinals jerseys with his name on the back. Wear one to any game, or on any street, and you're likely to get a thumbs up and a smile from strangers. In the way he lived and died, Tillman touched something in the hearts and minds of nearly everyone familiar with his story. That something has not faded since the day he was killed – April 22, 2004 – by friendly fire in Afghanistan.

"It is great to see that his life and his legacy are still relevant," Marie Tillman, Pat's widow, says. "I think it impacts people in a pretty special way."

That legacy is hard to describe, because, as Marie says, it means different things to different people.

It means pursuing your passion. As Pat once said, "To err on the side of passion is human and right and the only way I'll live."

It means living honestly and selflessly. It means giving something of yourself without expecting anything in return.

Pat Tillman did that long before he and his brother, Kevin, decided to enlist and become Army Rangers. While a Cardinal, Pat volunteered many hours visiting elementary schools and reading to kids. That's why it was fitting that last summer a school in Phoenix became the Pat Tillman Middle School.

"He loved visiting schools with energy," Kevin Tillman said that day to a gymnasium packed with students, staff, family, and friends of Pat. "I walked in here and I could barely breathe. There's so much energy here, and he loved that. The fact that this community has named a school in his honor, he would be quite tickled with that."

Pat placed a high value on service, education, and curiosity. That's why it's also fitting the Pat Tillman Foundation was created and awards scholarships to military veterans and their spouses. There are 813 Tillman Scholars today. They are students, teachers, artists, astronauts, lawyers, doctors, nurses, and on and on.

What they have in common are uncommon career accomplishments and one main goal: to fill the leadership gap that exists in the world today.

"Our job is not to make sure that every American knows who Pat was," says Dan Futrell, the CEO of the Tillman Foundation and a former Tillman Scholar. "But we do believe that the world would be a better place, and the country would be a better place, if more people led like Pat led.

"We (the foundation) exist because a guy lived and walked the earth and made decisions that even today are remarkable. And we happen to have built a process to find more people who have done remarkable things."

Futrell is one of those people. As a kid, he was in and out of foster care, but overcame those hardships thanks to selfless mentors who cared. Futrell went to Gonzaga on an ROTC scholarship. As an infantry officer, he was deployed to Iraq and won two Bronze Stars.

In 2011, he was selected to the third class of Tillman Scholars. He used it to earn a master's degree in public policy from Harvard and became CEO of the foundation in 2019.

Bernard Toney Jr., in the 2022 class of Tillman Scholars, enlisted in the Army to escape violence in his Atlanta, Ga., neighborhood. That violence included his best friend dying in his arms, the victim of a drive-by shooting.

"I was running from my situation but running toward something that will give me a better life," he says.

Four months after Tillman's death, Toney was deployed in the same area in which Pat was killed.

Greg Trott/AP Images

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"I've always had an affinity for understanding why he made the decisions that he did," Toney says. "And I am pretty much aligned with his ideals."

Toney speaks fluent French, some Russian, and is learning Korean. He also holds a Doctor of Medical Science degree and served in the White House Medical Corps for three-and-a-half years. He retired in 2022 after 21 years of service and works for the National Institutes of Health. The Tillman scholarship is helping him work toward a master's degree in public health.

In Afghanistan, Toney worked with "disenfranchised and marginalized populations," and the master's degree he's pursuing will help him continue doing so at home.

Over its 19 years, the foundation has awarded more than $24 million to its scholars. Funds are raised through donations, partnerships with companies, and the NFL, as well as the annual Pat's Run, a 4.2-mile walk/run that began as a small community event in Tempe. Today, the race is capped at 28,000 participants, but thousands of others join in via satellite runs throughout the country or on their own.

The value of each scholarship varies according to need and covers tuition or "anything that might be a barrier to education," Futrell says, including rent, food, day care, and transportation.

And the foundation does far more than just cut checks. It holds leadership summits for its scholars and tries to connect them to like-minded people across all disciplines and interests.

"That's been truly special to me, and, actually, it was what drove me to apply for the Pat Tillman scholarship," says Sara Wray, who is in her second year of law school at the University of Oklahoma. "There are a lot of different scholarships for military and military families. But this one just seemed very open-minded and driven by curiosity and passion."

Prior to law school, Wray worked as a crisis service victim advocate before moving to Japan with her husband, Mark, who is in the Air Force. When they returned to Oklahoma, Wray decided to pursue a law degree in order to better help abuse victims. Last spring, she attended one of the foundation's leadership seminars and came away even more invigorated.

"I talked to people who are studying things that I've never even heard of before," she says. "And I've loved that. And it's gotten me thinking about my own field, victim advocacy, or law, and things you can take from another field. To me, that's the magic of the program."

Leilani Attilio, a Tillman Scholar pursuing a nurse practitioner's degree, used an ROTC scholarship to earn her undergraduate degree and was a critical care nurse deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan. After leaving the Army, she became a public health nurse and found a passion working with underserved communities on drug policy. Becoming a nurse practitioner will allow her to become a primary care provider.

"When I went to the first Pat Tillman leadership summit, I was just blown away by the work that other Tillman Scholars were doing," she says. "And even though I was pretty intimidated by their work, I knew that in order to better myself, I needed to surround myself with smart people. I have never experienced a foundation or an organization quite like that."

That is part of a legacy that Pat Tillman never could have imagined leaving behind, and remarkably, it doesn't seem to be fading. Nearly two decades after his death, it's difficult to find anyone who hasn't heard of him and doesn't know what he stood for.

It's remarkable and hard to fully explain. But Toney comes as close as anyone.

"He made a decision that I think many people would not have even dreamed of. What compelled him to do that was he was a selfless, loving person. If we all had that level of selfless service and love for one another, the world would be a much better place.

"And I think he left that legacy, that mark, for us to be able to try to reach."

Kent Somers *is a sports columnist at the* Arizona Republic/*azcentral.com. He has covered the Cardinals and the NFL for 25 years and was the Cardinals beat writer during Pat Tillman's four seasons in the NFL.*

La Cour Images/Pat Tillman Foundation; AP Images; Tipping Point Photography/Pat Tillman Foundation

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Fans line up outside Munich's Allianz Arena for November's Seattle-Tampa Bay game, the first NFL regular-season contest played in Germany.

COUNTRY ROADS

DRIVEN BY FAN ENGAGEMENT AND PLAYER ENTHUSIASM, THE NFL CONTINUES TO EXPAND ITS INTERNATIONAL FOOTPRINT.

BY NEIL REYNOLDS

Mario Tama/Getty Images

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Tom Brady tips his cap to the fans following the Buccaneers' win over the Seahawks in Munich. Brady called the game "one of the greatest football experiences I've ever had."

On a crisp mid-November evening, Tom Brady walked off the field after leading his Tampa Bay Buccaneers to a historic 21-16 victory over the Seattle Seahawks in the first NFL regular-season game to be played in Germany.

Clutching a game ball that he was determined to keep alongside his seven Super Bowl rings, Brady waved an emotional farewell to the 69,811 fans inside Munich's Allianz Arena, who had clearly made a huge impression on the greatest player in NFL history.

As he neared the tunnel, Brady slowed, looked up, and mouthed: "Thank you."

Minutes later, he met with the media and heaped more praise on his latest winning destination. Victory in Bavaria meant Brady has now won NFL games in the United States, the United Kingdom, Mexico, and Germany.

"That was one of the greatest football experiences I've ever had," Brady declared. "That says a lot for 23 years in the league and a regular-season game. The fan turnout was incredible. It felt electric from the time we took the field.

"The end of the game, with fans singing 'Sweet Caroline' and 'Country Roads,' that was pretty epic. I think everyone who was a part of that experience got to have an amazing memory for their lives."

The raucous sing-alongs will live just as long in the memory as Brady's touchdown passes to Julio Jones and Chris Godwin. During the commercial break at the two-minute warning, the entire stadium was in full voice belting out John Denver's "Take Me Home, Country Roads." When the music stopped, the singing continued all the way through a key first down run from Rachaad White that iced Tampa's win.

Peter O'Reilly, NFL Executive Vice President, Club Business & League Events, noted that special moment was "the epitome of the joy and passion our global fans have for our game and the unifying experience it creates."

As the Buccaneers took knees to run out the clock, another remarkable thing happened. No one left. The German fans did not want a party that had been decades in the making to end. A full 20 minutes after the final gun, there were still more than 30,000 fans singing and dancing in celebration of a shared NFL passion.

Brady was not alone in being moved by the occasion. Peter King, of NBC Sports, was in Munich reporting on the game and said: "I thought it was a perfect day. Germany has proven that it deserves more than one game per year. This was fun. The NFL did right in coming here, and it should come here a lot more. I will always remember this game."

Football has long been popular in Germany. Five NFL preseason

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Left: Seahawks fans pose for a photo prior to the team's game in Germany. An enthusiastic crowd of 69,811 made it a memorable day by arriving early, singing songs throughout the contest, and staying long after the final whistle.
Right: German native and former NFL lineman Sebastian Vollmer was in attendance for the Bucs-Seahawks game in Munich. "I wish I could have played a game in Germany. ... It means so much to people, and that is really cool to witness."

Marcus Schreiber/AP Images

Maximilian Haupt/Getty Images

games were played in Berlin in the 1990s, and by the time NFL Europe closed down in 2007, five of the six teams in that spring league were based in Germany. Add in arguably the strongest domestic league in Europe, and Germany was a gridiron giant ready to be re-woken.

That was evident early on that foggy November morning in Munich as thousands gathered at the gates of the pregame fan party at 8.30 a.m. – seven hours before the kickoff. The mist and murk eventually gave way to celebratory sunshine, and the justification for adding Germany to the NFL's list of international venues was clear for all to see.

NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell explained: "We have a long history here. We played a preseason game back in 1990 after the wall fell in Berlin, then we had the World League and NFL Europe, and this first regular-season game in Germany is spectacular. This market deserves it."

Former NFL offensive lineman Sebastian Vollmer won two Super Bowls with the New England Patriots, and the German native was back in his homeland to witness his old quarterback in winning mode at Allianz Arena. Not surprisingly, emotions ran high.

"I wish I could have played a game in Germany – this means a lot," Vollmer said. "I met a fan before the game, and as I was walking up to her, she started crying. She was absolutely emotional about football. It means so much to people, and that is really cool to witness."

While Germany was the new addition to the NFL's international slate of games in 2022, London once again led the way overseas with three thrilling contests that were decided by one score. Each game was filled with big plays and late drama, but the Packers-Giants clash took on historic significance as Green Bay became the 32nd NFL team to play a regular-season game in the UK, completing the set and prompting Aaron Rodgers, the 2021 NFL Most Valuable Player, to exclaim: "Finally!"

Much like in Germany, the fans were out in force early for that contest between two of the NFL's most storied franchises. Tottenham Hotspur Stadium was a sea of green and gold.

NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell offers instruction to a young fan during a community outreach event in Munich prior to the NFL's first regular-season game in Germany.

Steve Luciano/AP Images

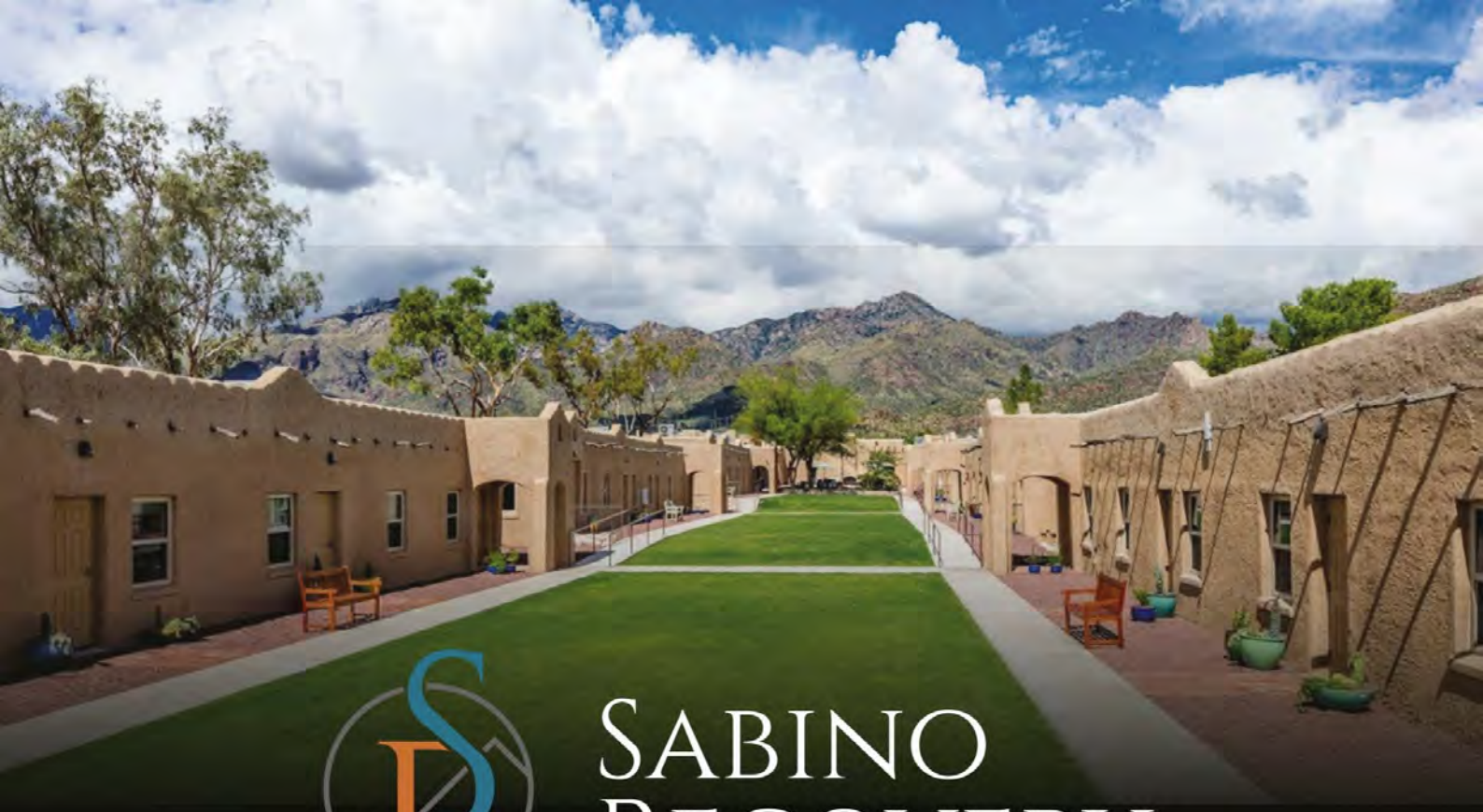
"THE LEAGUE IS IN A PERFECT PLACE FOR THIS. WE HAVE LONG-TERM LABOR AND MEDIA DEALS – WE HAVE STABILITY. WE BELIEVE THAT INTERNATIONAL IS A VERY SIGNIFICANT OPPORTUNITY FOR US."

— NFL COMMISSIONER ROGER GOODELL

And while Rodgers came out on the wrong side of the result, the future Hall of Famer was moved as he admitted: "The fans were incredible, and it was awesome. It was a great experience. The whole thing was outstanding. I had a blast. I'm going to remember it for a long time."

In summing up what he witnessed during 2022, O'Reilly said: "This season has brought tremendous momentum to the NFL internationally. From a hugely successful first-ever regular-season game in Germany to three amazing games in the UK and our return to playing in Mexico City, record-breaking crowds and viewers have had a chance to experience the best of the NFL.

"In markets around the world, we are seeing growth in the number of avid NFL fans, especially young fans who are engaging with the NFL, more girls and boys playing Flag football in organized programs in countries around the world, and there are now more than 100 foreign-born players on NFL rosters. Everywhere I travel for games or NFL fan events, you instantly feel the passion and see



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Fans in Mexico City were in a celebratory mood prior to the 49ers vs. Cardinals contest at Estadio Azteca. The Nov. 21 Monday night game had an attendance of 78,427 and capped the NFL's 2022 International Series.

Aaron Rodgers (12) leads the Packers' offense onto the field prior to the team's game vs. the Giants at London's Tottenham Hotspur Stadium. With Green Bay's appearance, all 32 NFL teams have now played at least one international game.

Last June's African Development Camp in Ghana provided an opportunity for players from several countries to earn an invitation to the International Player Pathway Combine.

the knowledge of fans that is growing stronger every day."

The NFL's global reach continues to spread beyond the UK, Germany, and Mexico. The league now has staff on the ground in Australia, and two-time Super Bowl champion Osi Umenyiora led an African Development Camp in Ghana last June. The week-long event featured 49 athletes from seven African countries and was also attended by Cleveland Browns linebacker Jeremiah Owusu-Koramoah and former All-Pro running back Maurice Jones-Drew.

After seeing 11 of the African attendees advance to the International Player Pathway Combine in London in October, Umenyiora said: "I think about what the game of football did for me. I was able to get an education through football and do all kinds of things through football. And to be able to replicate that for people from different parts of the world is really important.

"It was a good thing for me to do, and it was a good thing for the NFL to do. Now we have the International Player Pathway Combine and the NFL Academy, and they are giving a lot of people the opportunity to participate in this great game."

Jones-Drew added: "To be able to go to Africa, to be around the guys and to help grow the game; it was amazing. Life changing? Very much so. My mind was blown by what I saw."

As the curtain gets set to come down on the 2022 season, the NFL's international picture has never looked more exciting and more promising.

"International fan growth and growth of the game of football around the world is a major strategic priority for the NFL," O'Reilly stressed. "We now have the majority of NFL clubs (19) in our International Home Marketing Areas program across 10 countries and that means more great content and more ways for fans in those countries to connect with their favorite teams and players. We could not be more appreciative of our passionate global fans, and we're excited to bring them much more in the seasons ahead."

King believes a bold strategy should be adopted by the NFL, explaining: "I would be more aggressive. I would play more games. You have 16 teams every year that have a ninth home game that could theoretically move. If I'm Roger Goodell, I would get up at the league meetings this spring and say, 'This is the future. We need to go to Spain, to Brazil, and, at some point not far in the future, we need to go to Australia. We need to continue to make this a world game.'"

Goodell recently announced that Germany will host two games in 2023 and doesn't rule out a European division in the NFL's future, featuring two teams in London.

"The league is in a perfect place for this," Goodell said. "We have long-term labor and media deals – we have stability. We believe that international is a very significant opportunity for us. I think there is going to be a renewed effort and a renewed focus to make our game a truly global game."

Neil Reynolds *is the anchor of Sky Sports' television coverage of the NFL in the United Kingdom and also writes for NFL.com/UK and SkySports.com/NFL.*

BRONCO BREAK-THROUGH

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO IN SUPER BOWL XXXII, DENVER SNAPPED THE NFC'S 13-GAME SUPER BOWL WINNING STREAK AND PUT AN END TO ITS OWN TITLE GAME STRUGGLES.

BY TOM PELISSERO

BY THE TIME THE DENVER BRONCOS reached the franchise's fifth Super Bowl after the 1997 season, their fans had been scarred.

"There's a lot of people in Denver that didn't want us to go. 'Oh my god, they're gonna get killed again,'" former Broncos head coach Mike Shanahan recalled recently. "The times we went there, we were embarrassed. Then such a run with the NFC winning games, and the Packers were 13-point favorites (over us)."

Eight years had passed since Denver lost three Super Bowls in four seasons under head coach Dan Reeves, with John Elway at quarterback and Shanahan on staff as an assistant. They actually held second-quarter leads in the first two, against the Giants in Super Bowl XXI and Washington in Super Bowl XXII, before a 55-10 annihilation by the 49ers in Super Bowl XXIV that remains the biggest blowout in the game's history. (Denver also lost, 27-10, to the Cowboys in Super Bowl XII.)

The Broncos weren't alone, though. Starting with the 1984 season, NFC teams had racked up a remarkable 13 consecutive Super Bowl wins – including a 35-21 Packers triumph over the Patriots in Super Bowl XXXI. Now Green Bay was back and eyeing a second consecutive title.

"It was top of mind, because they'd won 13 years in a row," Broncos safety Steve Atwater says of the NFC's dominance. "We were victims in that. My rookie year we lost to the 49ers, and that was still in my mind. I never wanted to experience that again.

"We thought Green Bay was disrespecting us – even if they weren't, we put that in our mind to give us a little bit more motivation. 'They don't respect us. They won't think we can play with them.'"

The Broncos would prove plenty of people wrong that January day in San Diego, but it was a journey to get there.

Denver had gone 13-3 in 1996 to earn the top seed in the AFC playoff field, before the Jacksonville Jaguars – in just their second year of existence – went into Mile High Stadium, rushed for 203 yards,

Sporting News/Getty Images

Despite playing with the effects of a migraine, Denver's Terrell Davis earned Super Bowl XXXII MVP honors by rushing for 153 yards and three TDs in the win over Green Bay.

and shocked the home team, 30-27. For the 36-year-old Elway, nearing the end of his playing days after 14 seasons, squandering such an opportunity was devastating.

"Even though I'd lost three Super Bowls before that," Elway said later in an NFL Network interview, "that Jacksonville game was the biggest loss of my life."

Shanahan – who had been on the other side of the NFC's run (winning Super Bowl XXIX with the 49ers) before returning as Denver's head coach in 1995 – says he never considered any type of rebuild after the loss to Jacksonville.

Instead, the Broncos loaded up.

Elway restructured his contract to facilitate the signing of longtime nemesis Neil Smith, the fearsome defensive end who'd antagonized Denver for years while with the Chiefs. They also signed veteran fullback Howard Griffith, who helped pave the way for star running back Terrell Davis' two greatest seasons.

That 1997 team featured six future Hall of Famers – Elway, Davis, tight end Shannon Sharpe, offensive tackle Gary Zimmerman, Atwater, and team owner Pat Bowlen – along with standouts that included receivers Rod Smith and Ed McCaffrey, center Tom Nalen, and linebackers Bill Romanowski and John Mobley.

"That was really my first time being in an environment like that," Atwater remembers thinking. "We've got a great quarterback, we've got great defense, great offense, coaches, and everybody gets along, everybody cares about each other. It felt like destiny."

The Broncos won their first six games and were 11-2 before their only losing streak of the season: falling at Pittsburgh and then absorbing a 34-17 setback at San Francisco that was a stern reminder of the NFC's long dominance.

Worse, TV cameras captured Romanowski spitting in the face of 49ers receiver J.J. Stokes, sparking strong reactions inside the Broncos locker room and garnering national media attention even after Romanowski apologized.

"I know some of the guys on the team had a problem with that," Atwater recalls. "But in the moment, I was like, 'Hey man, it wasn't cool, but I'm rolling with you. You're my teammate.' We were lucky that didn't tear us apart."

If the locker room was affected, it didn't show six days later when the Broncos waxed the Chargers, 38-3, to finish 12-4. But the Chiefs won the AFC West, meaning Denver was a wild card and the No. 4 seed – setting up a playoff rematch with the Jaguars.

This time, the Broncos took care of business. They scored touchdowns on their first three possessions and kept pounding the ball – rushing for 310 yards in a 42-17 win. Eight days later, the Broncos were in Kansas City. They emerged from the defensive struggle with a 14-10 triumph, with cornerback Darrien Gordon deflecting away an Elvis Grbac pass on fourth-and-2 to seal it.

The AFC Championship Game sent the Broncos to Pittsburgh, where the game plan was to show blitzes often and get versatile Steelers quarterback Kordell Stewart to check out of run plays into passes. Stewart got free once for a 33-yard touchdown run, but he also threw three interceptions. On offense, Davis ran for 139 yards and a touchdown, Griffith turned a one-handed catch into another TD, and Elway hit Sharpe on "324 All Stop" – a play that wasn't in the game plan – to convert a critical third-and-6 in the fourth quarter and preserve a 24-21 win.

In the postgame locker room, Shanahan held the Lamar Hunt Trophy and told players: "This, right here, is not the one we want. … The next one is a whole lot sweeter."

For Elway, it was more than a chance for redemption.

"I can remember calling my mom after we beat Pittsburgh, and she said, 'Oh my god, we have to go back to the Super Bowl.' And I said, 'Yeah, Mom, we have to go back,'" Elway told NFL Network. "With the disappointment

John Elway's famous "Helicopter Run," in which he picked up a first down to set up a third-quarter TD, was instrumental in the Broncos' victory that ended the NFC's 13-year run of Super Bowl dominance.

Elaine Thompson/AP Images

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Denver's defense forced two first-half turnovers, including this fumble by Packers QB Brett Favre that set up a Broncos field goal. Broncos owner Pat Bowlen raises the Lombardi Trophy after the team's Super Bowl XXXII win – the first in franchise history. Denver has since added two more Super Bowl titles: XXXIII and 50.

from the year before of losing to Jacksonville in the first round of the playoffs and having been to the three Super Bowls earlier in my career, I just wanted a chance to go back and play."

Denver's defense forced three-time reigning NFL MVP Brett Favre into two first-half turnovers – an interception by safety Tyrone Braxton and a strip-sack by Atwater – and Elway gave Denver its first lead on a 1-yard bootleg TD off a fake to Davis, who carried out the call despite a migraine that temporarily left him unable to see.

With the game tied, 17-17, late in the third quarter, and facing third-and-6 at the Green Bay 12-yard line, Shanahan called "Point Slice" – a play specifically put in that week to beat a certain Packers defense near the goal line, and one Elway didn't particularly like.

"When I gave him the play, he almost gave me the finger – I could tell when he looked over on the sideline," Shanahan recalls. "I said, 'It's just a quarterback draw without the center going downfield. I know you too well. I know you'll make a play.'"

The Broncos didn't get the look they wanted, so Elway took a quick five-step drop to get Green Bay's linebackers to sink to the goal line, then took off and snuck a glance at the first-down marker. Three Packers defenders converged, sending Elway's body spinning through the air. But the now-famous "Helicopter Run" was good for 8 yards, setting up Davis' go-ahead 1-yard touchdown run two plays later.

The lead didn't last long: A 13-yard Favre-to-Antonio Freeman TD pass made it 24-24.

"I remember sitting in my room the whole week before the game and just praying," Elway says. "All I asked for was, 'God, just give me a chance to win this late in the game. Have us in the game with four, five, six minutes to go to where we have an opportunity to be world champs.'"

Elway got his chance and the Broncos' offense made one last march, going 51 yards in six plays – with Davis scoring on a 1-yard touchdown run with 1:45 left. Favre drove the Packers to Denver's 31-yard line before the Broncos got the stop they needed, sealing the 31-24 upset.

Davis was named Super Bowl MVP, thanks to 157 rushing yards and a Super Bowl-record three TD runs. Elway's teammates carried him off the field with a crowd of cameras around him, the NFC's long dominance and the Broncos' title-game futility both officially over.

"There's one thing I want to say here tonight. It's only four words," Broncos owner Pat Bowlen proclaimed on the podium, hoisting the Lombardi Trophy before handing it to Elway. "This one's for John!"

It wasn't the last one for Elway and the Broncos, though.

They started the 1998 season 13-0 – extending their winning streak over two seasons to 18 games – and steamrolled their way to a second straight Super Bowl title with dominant playoff wins over the Dolphins, Jets, and Falcons. Elway took home Super Bowl XXXIII MVP honors and then called it a career.

Just one team, the Patriots in 2003 and '04, has won back-to-back championships since. From 1996 to '98, including playoffs, the Broncos were an incredible 46-10. And their two titles started the AFC's Super Bowl turnaround. Over the past 25 seasons, the AFC has won 15 Super Bowls – including another Denver title in Super Bowl 50.

"Anytime you have three years when you won more games than anybody at that time in history, you've got some character and you've got some good players," Shanahan says. "We had guys with very good character, and we had guys who really wanted to find a way to win, because we had been to Super Bowls, but we hadn't gotten it done. It was a special group of people."

Tom Pelissero *is an Insider for NFL Network who has covered the league since 2003. He lives in Minneapolis with his wife and two daughters.*

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Sunday Best

SCORES AND STORIES FROM THE FIRST 56 SUPER BOWLS

Chris Graythen/Getty Images

When Joe Namath led the Jets to a stunning victory over the Colts in Super Bowl III, it gave credibility to the American Football League and elevated the profile of the Super Bowl.

Walter Iooss Jr./Getty Images

SUPER BOWL I

January 15, 1967
Memorial Coliseum | Los Angeles
Attendance: 61,946

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Kansas City	0	10	0	0	**10**
Green Bay	7	7	14	7	**35**

MVP: Bart Starr (QB), Green Bay
16 of 23 passing, 250 yards, 2 TDs

The Packers opened the Super Bowl era by defeating the AFL champion Chiefs behind the passing of Bart Starr, the receiving of Max McGee, and a key interception by safety Willie Wood. Leading by a narrow 14-10 margin at the half, Green Bay took control with three second-half touchdowns, the first of which was set up by Wood's 50-yard interception return. McGee, filling in for an ailing Boyd Dowler after having only four receptions all season, caught seven passes for 138 yards and two touchdowns. Elijah Pitts rushed for two other Packers scores. All of the Chiefs' points came in the second quarter, including a 7-yard TD pass from Len Dawson to Curtis McClinton.

SUPER BOWL II

January 14, 1968
Orange Bowl | Miami
Attendance: 75,546

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Green Bay	3	13	10	7	**33**
Oakland	0	7	0	7	**14**

MVP: Bart Starr (QB), Green Bay
13 of 24 passing, 202 yards, 1 TD

Two weeks after capturing its third consecutive NFL championship, Green Bay won the Super Bowl title for the second straight year, defeating the Raiders in a game that drew the first $3 million gate in football history. Bart Starr directed an attack that built a 16-7 halftime lead and pulled away after intermission. Don Chandler kicked four field goals for the victors, and cornerback Herb Adderley capped the Green Bay scoring with his 60-yard interception-return TD. The game marked the last for Vince Lombardi as Packers coach, ending a tenure that saw his teams win five NFL titles and two Super Bowls.

SUPER BOWL III

January 12, 1969
Orange Bowl | Miami
Attendance: 75,389

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
N.Y. Jets	0	7	6	3	**16**
Baltimore	0	0	0	7	**7**

MVP: Joe Namath (QB), N.Y. Jets
17 of 28 passing, 206 yards

Jets quarterback Joe Namath "guaranteed" victory on the Thursday before Super Bowl III, then went out and delivered by leading the AFL's Jets to a huge upset – beating a Colts team that had lost only once all season. Namath directed a steady attack that dominated the NFL champions, while the Jets' defense intercepted Colts quarterback Earl Morrall three times in the first half. New York had 337 total yards, including 121 on the ground from Matt Snell. Johnny Unitas, who missed most of the season with a sore elbow, came off the bench to lead Baltimore to its only touchdown late in the fourth quarter.

SUPER BOWL IV

January 11, 1970
Tulane Stadium | New Orleans
Attendance: 80,562

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Minnesota	0	0	7	0	**7**
Kansas City	3	13	7	0	**23**

MVP: Len Dawson (QB), Kansas City
12 of 17 passing, 142 yards, 1 TD

The AFL squared the Super Bowl series at two victories apiece behind Len Dawson's superb quarterbacking and a powerful defense. Dawson called an almost flawless game and hit Otis Taylor on a 46-yard pass for the Chiefs' final touchdown, minutes after the Vikings scored their only points. The Kansas City defense forced five turnovers (three interceptions, two fumbles) and limited Minnesota's strong rushing game to 67 yards. Jan Stenerud provided an early spark for the Chiefs with field goals from 48, 32, and 25 yards, while Mike Garrett's 5-yard TD run before halftime made the score 16-0.

SUPER BOWL V–VIII

SUPER BOWL V

January 17, 1971
Orange Bowl | Miami
Attendance: 79,204

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Baltimore	0	6	0	10	**16**
Dallas	3	10	0	0	**13**

MVP: Chuck Howley (LB), Dallas
2 interceptions, 3 tackles

A 32-yard field goal by rookie kicker Jim O'Brien brought the Colts to victory in the closing seconds of Super Bowl V, the first time the Super Bowl was played on artificial turf. The Cowboys led, 13-6, in the fourth quarter, but interceptions by Rick Volk and Mike Curtis set up a Baltimore touchdown and O'Brien's decisive kick. Johnny Unitas threw for the Colts' first touchdown – a pass that caromed off receiver Eddie Hinton's fingertips, off Dallas' Mel Renfro, and settled into the hands of tight end John Mackey, who scored on the 75-yard play. The Cowboys' Chuck Howley became the first defensive player and the first (and still only) player from a losing team to be named Super Bowl MVP.

SUPER BOWL VI

January 16, 1972
Tulane Stadium | New Orleans
Attendance: 81,023

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Dallas	3	7	7	7	**24**
Miami	0	3	0	0	**3**

MVP: Roger Staubach (QB), Dallas
12 of 19 passing, 119 yards, 2 TDs

The Cowboys rushed for 252 yards, and their defense limited the Dolphins to just 185 total yards and became the first to not allow a touchdown in the Super Bowl. Chuck Howley's recovery of a Larry Csonka fumble led to a 3-0 Dallas advantage, and a Roger Staubach TD pass to Lance Alworth made it 10-3 at the break. After the Cowboys received the second-half kickoff, Duane Thomas keyed a 71-yard march that ended with his 3-yard scoring run. Early in the fourth quarter, Howley picked off a pass that he returned deep into Miami territory, and three plays later Staubach passed 7 yards to Mike Ditka for the game's final touchdown. Thomas finished with 95 rushing yards and teammate Walt Garrison added 74.

SUPER BOWL VII

January 14, 1973
Memorial Coliseum | Los Angeles
Attendance: 90,182

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Miami	7	7	0	0	**14**
Washington	0	0	0	7	**7**

MVP: Jake Scott (S), Miami 2 interceptions

On their way to perfection, the Dolphins played virtually perfect football in Super Bowl VII. Their defense allowed Washington to cross midfield only once in the first half, and Miami's offense turned good field position into two touchdowns. The Dolphins drove 63 yards for their first score, a 28-yard pass from Bob Griese to Howard Twilley. After Washington reached the Miami 48 late in the half, linebacker Nick Buoniconti intercepted a pass that he returned 25 yards. Five plays later, just 18 seconds before intermission, Jim Kiick scored on a 1-yard run. Dolphins safety Jake Scott had two interceptions, one in the end zone that ended another Washington threat.

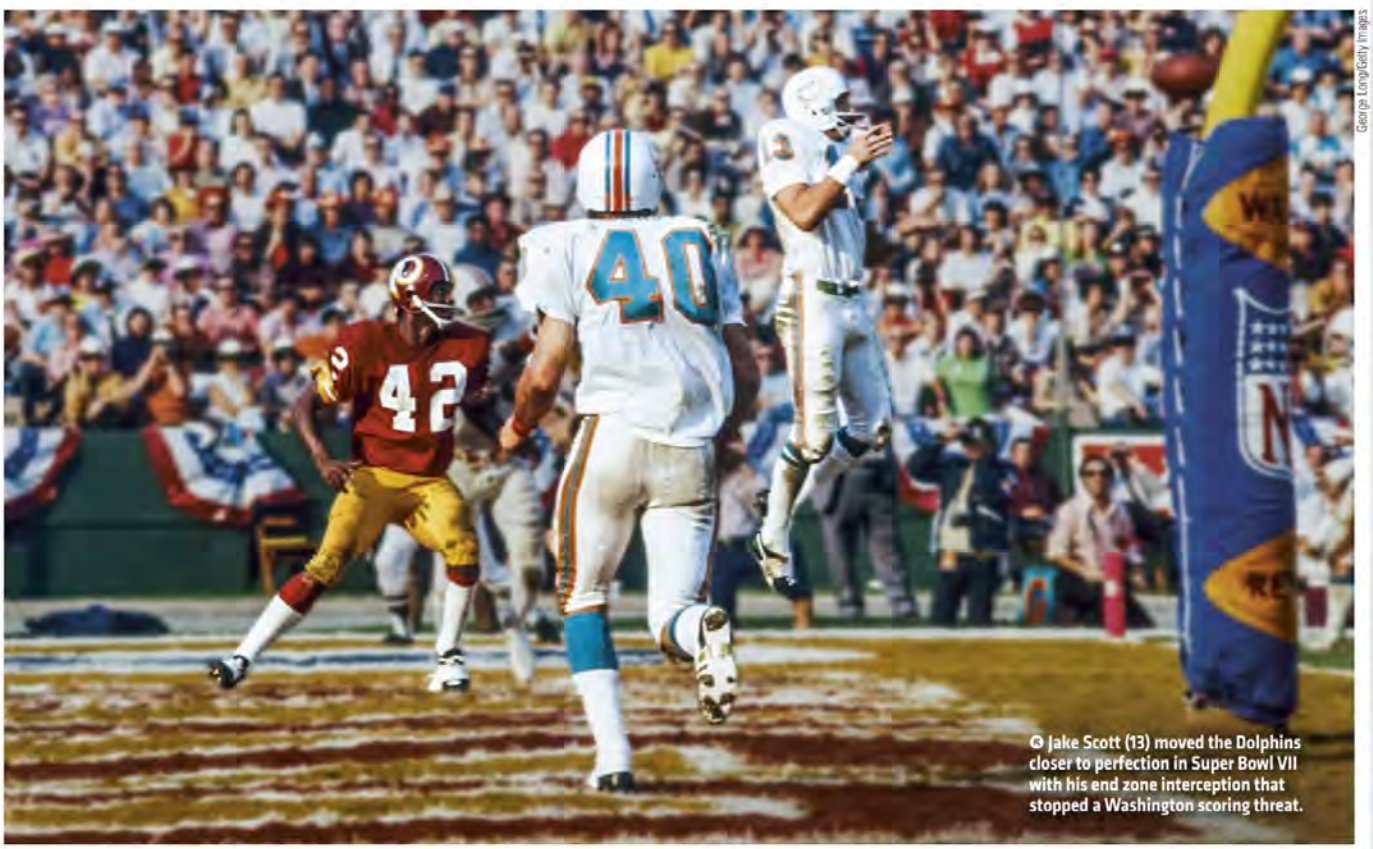
SUPER BOWL VIII

January 13, 1974
Rice Stadium | Houston
Attendance: 71,882

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Minnesota	0	0	0	7	**7**
Miami	14	3	7	0	**24**

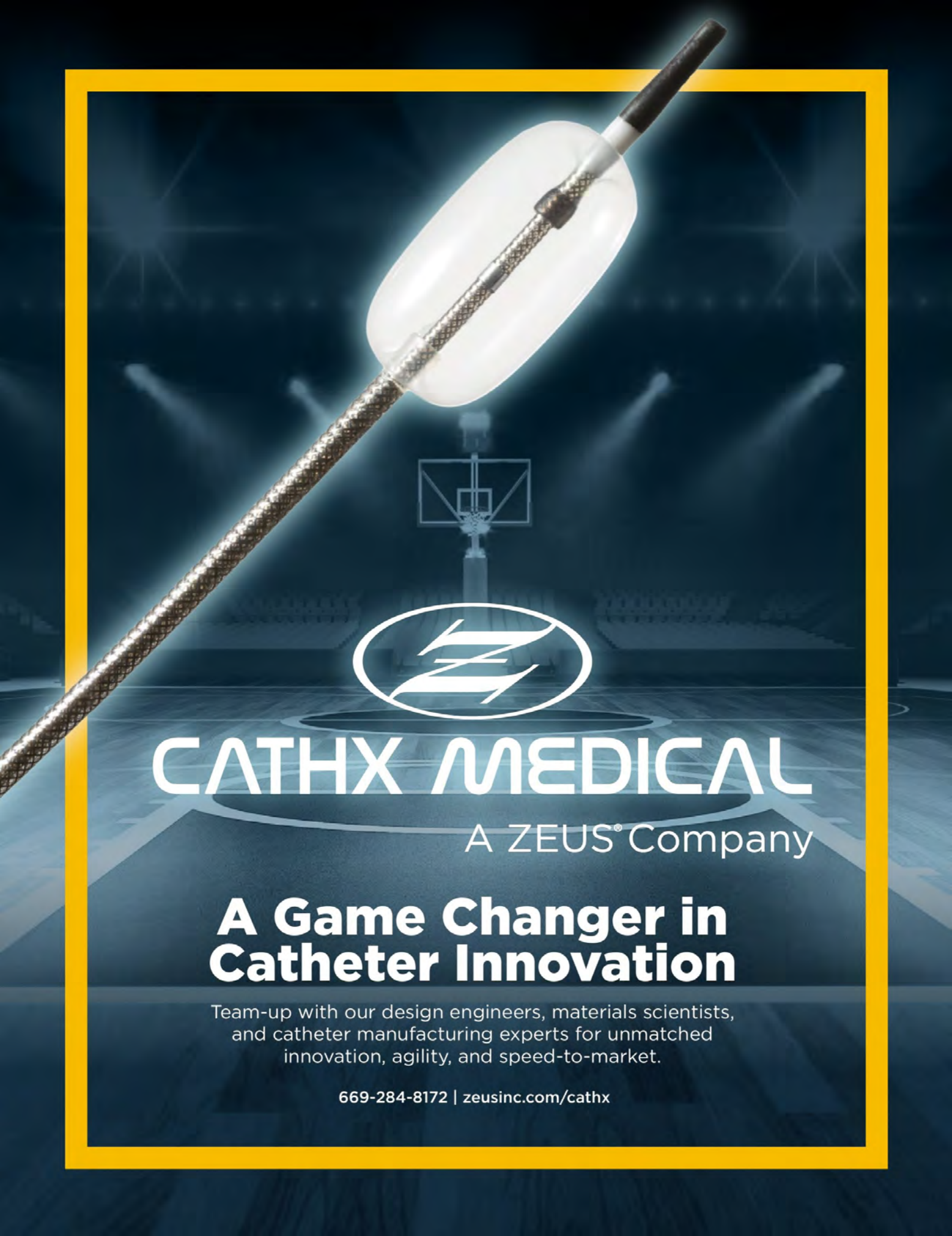
MVP: Larry Csonka (RB), Miami
33 carries, 145 yards, 2 TDs

Representing the AFC for the third consecutive year, the Dolphins scored the first two times they had the ball – on marches of 62 and 56 yards – while their defense limited Minnesota to only seven plays in the first quarter. Larry Csonka capped the initial 10-play drive with his 5-yard TD bolt through right guard, and another 10-play scoring drive ended with Jim Kiick bursting 1 yard up the middle. Garo Yepremian's 28-yard field goal made it 17-0. The Vikings would then drive deep into Miami territory, but were stopped on fourth-and-1 from the 6 on a big hit by middle linebacker Nick Buoniconti.



George Long/Getty Images

Jake Scott (13) moved the Dolphins closer to perfection in Super Bowl VII with his end zone interception that stopped a Washington scoring threat.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SUPER BOWL IX

January 12, 1975
Tulane Stadium | New Orleans
Attendance: 80,997

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Pittsburgh	0	2	7	7	**16**
Minnesota	0	0	0	6	**6**

MVP: Franco Harris (RB), Pittsburgh
34 carries, 158 yards, 1 TD

A new chapter in Steelers history began with this victory over the Vikings, the first of four Super Bowl titles won under coach Chuck Noll. The teams struggled through a first half that saw the only points scored when Pittsburgh's Dwight White downed quarterback Fran Tarkenton in the end zone for a safety. But it didn't take long for the Steelers to add to that lead after intermission. Minnesota's Bill Brown fumbled the second-half kickoff and Marv Kellum recovered on the Vikings 30. Four plays later, Franco Harris' 9-yard touchdown run gave his team a 9-0 lead. Pittsburgh's powerful defense permitted only 119 total yards on the day, including 17 rushing yards.

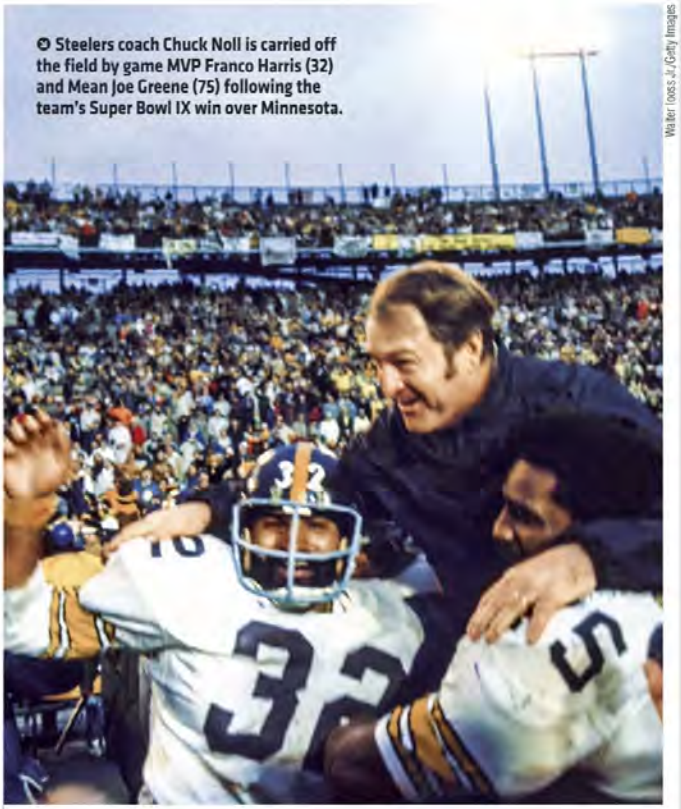
SUPER BOWL X

January 18, 1976
Orange Bowl | Miami
Attendance: 80,187

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Dallas	7	3	0	7	**17**
Pittsburgh	7	0	0	14	**21**

MVP: Lynn Swann (WR), Pittsburgh
4 receptions, 161 yards, 1 TD

The Steelers captured the Super Bowl for the second straight year, helped along by Terry Bradshaw's 64-yard touchdown pass to Lynn Swann and an aggressive defense that snuffed out a late Dallas rally. The Steelers scored on Bradshaw's 7-yard TD pass to Randy Grossman, the long throw to Swann, Roy Gerela's 36- and 18-yard field goals, and Reggie Harrison's blocked punt that went through the end zone for a safety. Dallas, though, still only trailed by four when it took possession with 1:22 to go, but had its hopes dashed on Glen Edwards' end-zone interception on the game's final play.



Steelers coach Chuck Noll is carried off the field by game MVP Franco Harris (32) and Mean Joe Greene (75) following the team's Super Bowl IX win over Minnesota.

Walter Iooss Jr./Getty Images

SUPER BOWL XI

January 9, 1977
Rose Bowl | Pasadena
Attendance: 103,438

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Oakland	0	16	3	13	**32**
Minnesota	0	0	7	7	**14**

MVP: Fred Biletnikoff (WR), Oakland
4 receptions, 79 yards

In front of 81 million television viewers, the largest audience ever to watch a sporting event, the Raiders won their first Super Bowl title. Clarence Davis rushed for 137 yards, Fred Biletnikoff made four key receptions, and the defense came up big for the victors. Oakland built a 16-0 halftime lead – on Errol Mann's 24-yard field goal, a 1-yard TD pass from Ken Stabler to Dave Casper, and Pete Banaszak's 1-yard scoring run. After the Vikings cut the deficit to 19-7, a pair of fourth-quarter interceptions clinched the championship for the Raiders. One set up Banaszak's second touchdown run, while the other resulted in cornerback Willie Brown's 75-yard interception return for a score.

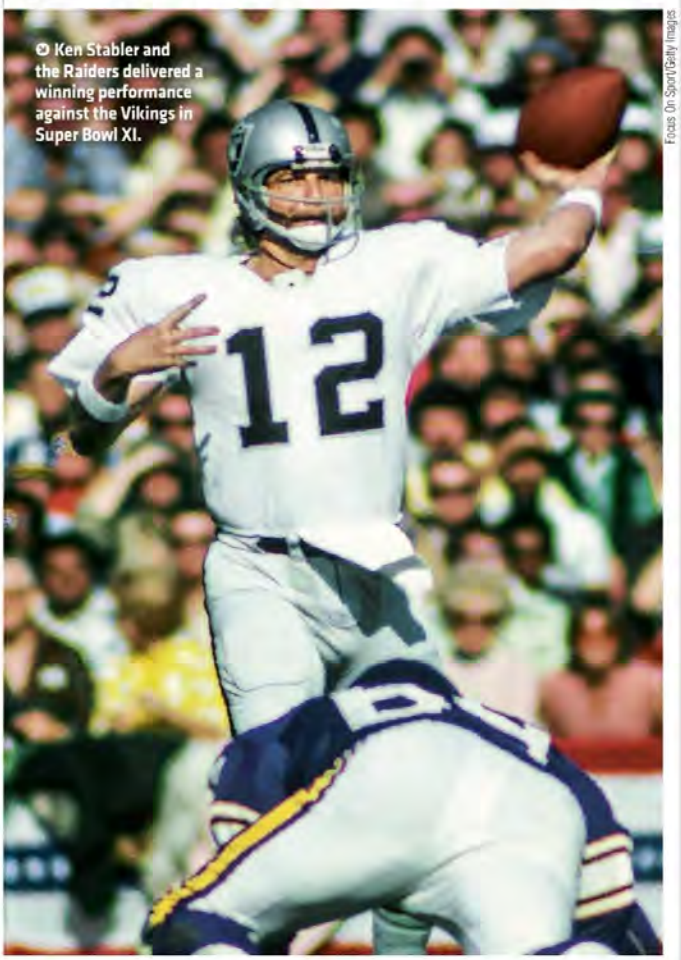
SUPER BOWL XII

January 15, 1978
Superdome | New Orleans
Attendance: 75,583

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Dallas	10	3	7	7	**27**
Denver	0	0	10	0	**10**

MVPs: Randy White (DT) and Harvey Martin (DE), Dallas
Leaders of a defense that had four sacks and allowed just 156 total yards

Super Bowl TV viewership exceeded 100 million fans for the first time, and they watched as the Cowboys forced six first-half turnovers on their way to a 13-0 halftime lead. Dallas then tacked on two second-half TDs, the first on Butch Johnson's spectacular diving catch in the end zone and the other when running back Robert Newhouse tossed a 29-yard pass to Golden Richards. As part of the win, Roger Staubach completed 17 of 25 passes for 183 yards and Tony Dorsett rushed for 68 yards, including a 3-yard TD. The game marked the first – and remains the only – time the MVP Award was shared.



Ken Stabler and the Raiders delivered a winning performance against the Vikings in Super Bowl XI.

Focus On Sport/Getty Images

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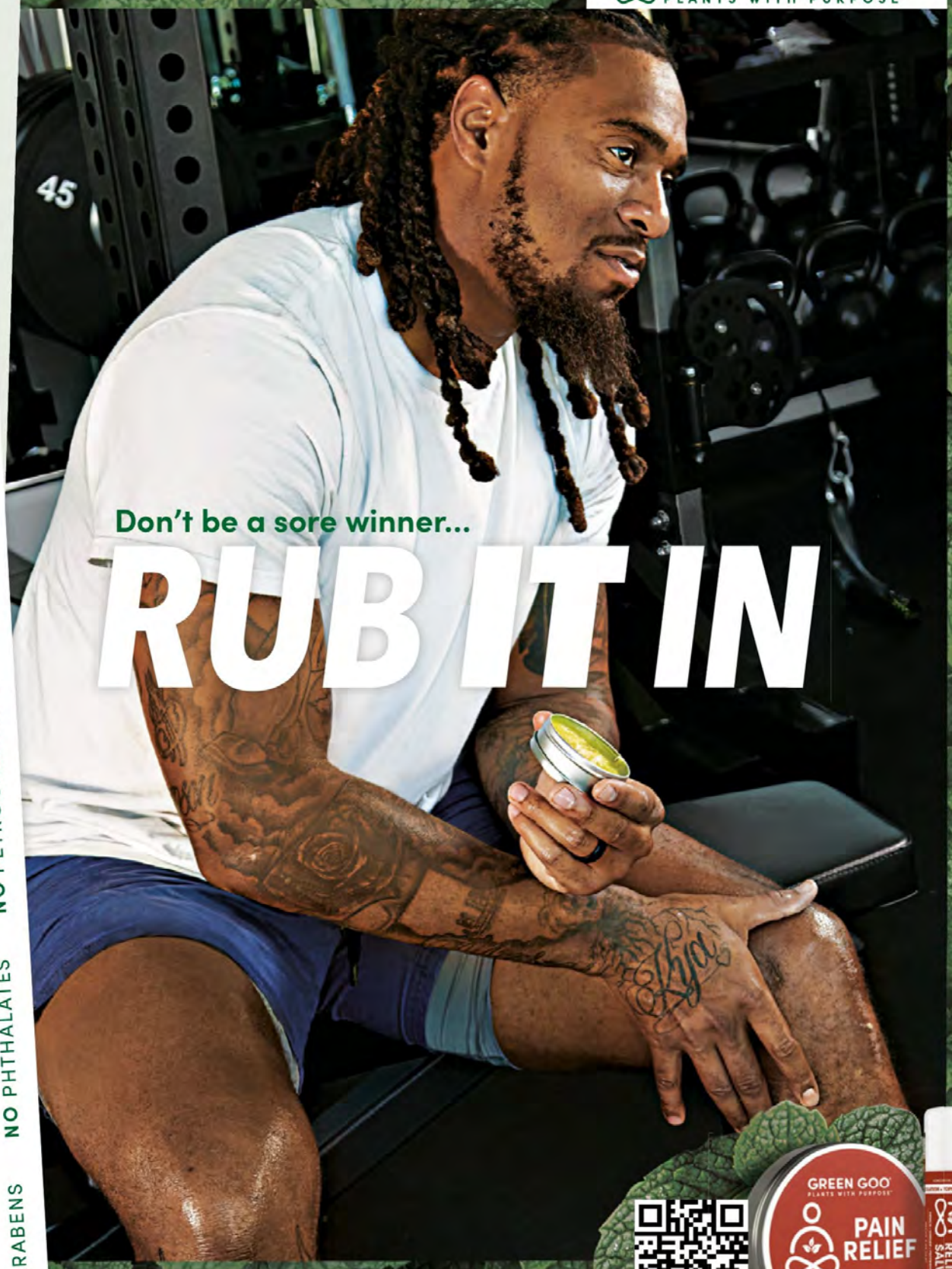

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SUPER BOWL XIII

January 21, 1979
Orange Bowl | Miami
Attendance: 79,484

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Pittsburgh	7	14	0	14	**35**
Dallas	7	7	3	14	**31**

MVP: Terry Bradshaw (QB), Pittsburgh
17 of 30 passing, 318 yards, 4 TDs

Terry Bradshaw's four touchdown passes led the Steelers, who became the first team to win three Super Bowls. The first two scoring tosses went to John Stallworth, and the third, with 26 seconds remaining in the second quarter, was to Rocky Bleier for a 21-14 halftime lead. The Steelers then broke things open with TDs 19 seconds apart midway through the final quarter – Franco Harris rambled 22 yards for a score, and after Dennis Winston recovered a fumble on the ensuing kickoff, Bradshaw fired an 18-yard strike to Lynn Swann.

SUPER BOWL XIV

January 20, 1980
Rose Bowl | Pasadena
Attendance: 103,985

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
L.A. Rams	7	6	6	0	**19**
Pittsburgh	3	7	7	14	**31**

MVP: Terry Bradshaw (QB), Pittsburgh
14 of 21 passing, 309 yards, 2 TDs

Trailing 13-10 at halftime, the Steelers rallied to win their fourth Super Bowl crown in six years. They briefly moved ahead in the third quarter when Terry Bradshaw hit Lynn Swann on a 47-yard TD pass, but the Rams responded on their next possession with Lawrence McCutcheon throwing a halfback option touchdown to Ron Smith. The Steelers would finally take the lead for good in the fourth quarter on Bradshaw's 73-yard touchdown throw to John Stallworth. After stopping an L.A. threat with a Jack Lambert interception, Pittsburgh sealed the verdict with Franco Harris' 1-yard TD run.

SUPER BOWL XV

January 25, 1981
Superdome | New Orleans
Attendance: 76,135

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Oakland	14	0	10	3	**27**
Philadelphia	0	3	0	7	**10**

MVP: Jim Plunkett (QB), Oakland
13 of 21 passing, 261 yards, 3 TDs

Jim Plunkett passed for three touchdowns, including an 80-yard strike to Kenny King late in the first quarter, as the Raiders became the first wild card team to win the Super Bowl. Linebacker Rod Martin set up Oakland's first touchdown with an interception, one of a Super Bowl-record three he had in the game, while King's grab marked the longest play in Super Bowl history at the time. Oakland's Mark van Eeghen led all rushers with 75 yards, while teammate Cliff Branch had five receptions for 67 yards, including two catches that went for touchdowns.

SUPER BOWL XVI

January 24, 1982
Silverdome | Pontiac
Attendance: 81,270

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
San Francisco	7	13	0	6	**26**
Cincinnati	0	0	7	14	**21**

MVP: Joe Montana (QB), San Francisco
14 of 22 passing, 157 yards, 1 TD

Ray Wersching kicked a Super Bowl record-tying four field goals and Joe Montana directed a controlled passing attack to lift the 49ers to their first NFL crown. San Francisco owned a 20-0 halftime lead thanks to Montana's 1-yard TD run, Earl Cooper's 11-yard scoring catch, and 22- and 26-yard field goals from Wersching. The Bengals closed the gap on Ken Anderson's 5-yard TD run and Dan Ross' 4-yard scoring grab, but the 49ers' kicker padded the lead with two fourth-quarter field goals. Cincinnati outgained San Francisco, 356-275, marking the first time in Super Bowl history that the losing team had more total yards.

AP Images

Terry Bradshaw earned his first of two Super Bowl MVP Awards when the Steelers stopped the Cowboys in Super Bowl XIII.

Joe Montana (16) brought the 49ers to new heights in their victory over the Bengals in Super Bowl XVI.

Focus On Sport/Getty Images

SUPER BOWL XVII–XX

Richard Dent (95) was part of a relentless Bears defense that brought down the Patriots in Super Bowl XX.

Lennox McLendon/AP Images

SUPER BOWL XVII

January 30, 1983
Rose Bowl | Pasadena
Attendance: 103,667

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Miami	7	10	0	0	**17**
Washington	0	10	3	14	**27**

MVP: John Riggins (RB), Washington
38 carries, 166 yards, 1 TD

John Riggins topped 100 rushing yards for the fourth straight playoff game, part of a 276-yard ground effort for Washington, which won its first NFL title since 1942. The Dolphins held a 17-10 halftime lead, but wouldn't score again. Mark Moseley's short field goal pulled Washington within three, and Riggins moved his team ahead when he rambled 43 yards on a fourth-and-1 play early in the fourth quarter. Charlie Brown's 6-yard TD catch with 1:55 left closed out the scoring. The Dolphins managed only 176 total yards of offense, and just 34 after intermission.

SUPER BOWL XVIII

January 22, 1984
Tampa Stadium | Tampa
Attendance: 72,920

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Washington	0	3	6	0	**9**
L.A. Raiders	7	14	14	3	**38**

MVP: Marcus Allen (RB), L.A. Raiders
20 carries, 191 yards, 2 TDs

Derrick Jensen's end-zone recovery of a punt he blocked – giving the Raiders a 7-0 lead less than five minutes into the game – put his team on course for a one-sided victory. Two key plays sealed Washington's fate. With just seven seconds left in the first half, Raiders linebacker Jack Squirek intercepted a pass at the Washington 5-yard line that he ran in for a touchdown to give Los Angeles a 21-3 lead. Then, on the final play of the third quarter, game MVP Marcus Allen darted 74 yards for a backbreaking touchdown.

SUPER BOWL XIX

January 20, 1985
Stanford Stadium | Stanford
Attendance: 84,059

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Miami	10	6	0	0	**16**
San Francisco	7	21	10	0	**38**

MVP: Joe Montana (QB), San Francisco
24 of 35 passing, 331 yards, 3 TDs

The 49ers' offense piled up 537 net yards as Joe Montana got the best of Dan Marino in this battle of future Hall of Fame QBs. Roger Craig became the first player to score three TDs in a Super Bowl game, one of those on an 8-yard TD reception that gave the 49ers a lead they would never relinquish. He added a short touchdown run before halftime and would close out San Francisco's scoring with a 16-yard reception from Montana. Craig finished with 58 yards rushing and caught seven passes for another 77 yards. The 49ers also held a 37:11 to 22:49 time of possession advantage.

SUPER BOWL XX

January 26, 1986
Superdome | New Orleans
Attendance: 73,818

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Chicago	13	10	21	2	**46**
New England	3	0	0	7	**10**

MVP: Richard Dent (DE), Chicago
1.5 sacks, part of defense that allowed 7 rushing yards

In a dominating display from start to finish, the Bears' league-leading defense recorded seven sacks and limited the Patriots to just 7 rushing yards. Chicago yielded an early field goal but then scored the game's next 44 points. Jim McMahon and Matt Suhey had scoring runs and Kevin Butler kicked three field goals to give the Bears a 23-3 halftime lead. After forcing a Patriots punt to start the second half, Chicago marched 96 yards for another TD to put the game out of reach. The Bears' Walter Payton rushed for 61 yards, while Richard Dent became just the fifth defender to be named Super Bowl MVP.

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Andy Hayt/Getty Images

Phil Simms (11) was on target throughout the Giants' Super Bowl XXI win over the Broncos, completing 22 of 25 passes, three that went for touchdowns.

Lennox McLendon/AP Images

Jerry Rice caught 11 passes for a Super Bowl-record 215 receiving yards while reeling in MVP honors in the 49ers' Super Bowl XXIII victory over the Bengals.

SUPER BOWL XXI

January 25, 1987
Rose Bowl | Pasadena
Attendance: 101,063

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Denver	10	0	0	10	**20**
N.Y. Giants	7	2	17	13	**39**

MVP: Phil Simms (QB), N.Y. Giants
22 of 25 passing, 268 yards, 3 TDs

Buoyed by a big defensive stand in the second quarter, the Giants captured their first NFL title since 1956. The Broncos, already leading by a 10-7 score, had a first down at the New York 1-yard line, but were stymied on three running plays and then missed a short field-goal attempt. The Giants would take command in the third quarter en route to a 30-point second half – scoring four touchdowns and a field goal on their first five possessions after intermission – and moved in front for good on Mark Bavaro's 13-yard TD reception. Phil Simms deftly managed the game for the victors, setting Super Bowl records for completion percentage (88.0) and passer rating (150.92).

SUPER BOWL XXII

January 31, 1988
Jack Murphy Stadium | San Diego
Attendance: 73,302

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Washington	0	35	0	7	**42**
Denver	10	0	0	0	**10**

MVP: Doug Williams (QB), Washington
18 of 29 passing, 340 yards, 4 TDs

Washington enjoyed a record-setting second quarter on its way to victory. Trailing 10-0, Washington scored touchdowns on five straight possessions – establishing an NFL postseason mark for most points in a quarter (35). QB Doug Williams led the way by passing for four TDs, including 80- and 50-yard bombs to Ricky Sanders, and the five scores required only 18 total plays and 5:47 in possession. Timmy Smith amassed a Super Bowl-record 204 rushing yards (a mark that still stands), Barry Wilburn had two of Washington's three interceptions, and Alvin Walton recorded two of the team's five sacks.

SUPER BOWL XXIII

January 22, 1989
Joe Robbie Stadium | Miami
Attendance: 75,129

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Cincinnati	0	3	10	3	**16**
San Francisco	3	0	3	14	**20**

MVP: Jerry Rice (WR), San Francisco
11 receptions, 215 yards, 1 TD

By scoring on one of the most famous and clutch drives in league history, the 49ers became the first NFC team to win three Super Bowls. Cincinnati had taken a 16-13 lead on Jim Breech's 40-yard field goal with 3:20 left in the fourth quarter, but Joe Montana calmly drove San Francisco 92 yards over 11 plays, capped by his 10-yard touchdown pass to John Taylor with just 34 seconds remaining. It was Taylor's lone catch of the game. Montana completed 23 of 36 passes for 357 yards, helping San Francisco post a 453 to 229 advantage in total yards. The game was the last at the helm for 49ers head coach Bill Walsh.

SUPER BOWL XXIV

January 28, 1990
Superdome | New Orleans
Attendance: 72,919

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
San Francisco	13	14	14	14	**55**
Denver	3	0	7	0	**10**

MVP: Joe Montana (QB), San Francisco
22 of 29 passing, 297 yards, 5 TDs

The 49ers coasted to victory while setting a Super Bowl record for points that still stands. They scored touchdowns on four of their six first-half possessions to take a 27-3 lead at intermission, then cemented their advantage with interceptions by Michael Walter and Chet Brooks to end Denver's first two drives of the second half. Joe Montana was named Super Bowl MVP for a then-record third time, with his favorite target being Jerry Rice, who caught seven passes for 148 yards and three touchdowns. The 49ers' dominance extended to first downs (28 to 12), net yards (461 to 167), and time of possession (39:31 to 20:29).

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SUPER BOWL XXV–XXVIII

SUPER BOWL XXV

January 27, 1991
Tampa Stadium | Tampa
Attendance: 73,813

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Buffalo	3	9	0	7	**19**
N.Y. Giants	3	7	7	3	**20**

MVP: Ottis Anderson (RB), N.Y. Giants
102 rushing yards, 1 TD; 5 receptions

Successfully employing a ball-control offense that saw them maintain possession for more than 40 minutes, the Giants edged the high-powered Bills. Fourteen of New York's 73 plays came on its opening drive of the third quarter, which consumed a Super Bowl-record 9:29 and ended with Ottis Anderson's 1-yard touchdown run. A Thurman Thomas TD run put Buffalo back in front, but Matt Bahr gave New York the lead for good with his 21-yard field goal midway through the fourth quarter. Giants QB Jeff Hostetler was efficient in victory, completing 20 of 32 passes for 222 yards, including a 14-yard TD to Stephen Baker in the second quarter.

SUPER BOWL XXVI

January 26, 1992
Metrodome | Minneapolis
Attendance: 63,130

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Washington	0	17	14	6	**37**
Buffalo	0	0	10	14	**24**

MVP: Mark Rypien (QB), Washington
18 of 33 passing, 292 yards, 2 TDs

After Buffalo had shaved 10 points off a 24-0 deficit, Mark Rypien restored order with his 30-yard TD pass to Gary Clark that propelled Washington to its third Super Bowl win in 10 years – all of them under coach Joe Gibbs but each with a different quarterback. Washington held a 17-0 halftime lead and quickly extended it on Gerald Riggs' short scoring run that was set up by a Kurt Gouveia interception. It was one of four pickoffs by the team's defense. Clark finished with seven catches for 114 yards and Art Monk added seven for 113 yards for the victors, who amassed 417 yards of total offense.

SUPER BOWL XXVII

January 31, 1993
Rose Bowl | Pasadena
Attendance: 98,374

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Buffalo	7	3	7	0	**17**
Dallas	14	14	3	21	**52**

MVP: Troy Aikman (QB), Dallas
22 of 30 passing, 273 yards, 4 TDs

Troy Aikman threw four touchdown passes, Emmitt Smith rushed for 108 yards, and the Cowboys' defense forced nine turnovers in this one-sided victory. Two of those turnovers helped the Cowboys take the lead for good late in the opening quarter. First, Dallas safety James Washington intercepted a pass that he returned to the Bills 47, setting up Aikman's 23-yard TD throw to Jay Novacek. On the next play from scrimmage, a sack by the Cowboys' Charles Haley forced a fumble that teammate Jimmie Jones scooped up and ran 2 yards for another score.

SUPER BOWL XXVIII

January 30, 1994
Georgia Dome | Atlanta
Attendance: 72,817

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Dallas	6	0	14	10	**30**
Buffalo	3	10	0	0	**13**

MVP: Emmitt Smith (RB), Dallas
30 carries, 132 yards, 2 TDs

The Cowboys became the first team to open the season 0-2 and go on to win the Super Bowl, and the fifth team to capture back-to-back Super Bowl titles. A big defensive play and Emmitt Smith's two touchdown runs helped Dallas erase a 13-6 halftime deficit. Just 55 seconds after intermission, safety James Washington recovered a fumble and weaved his way 46 yards for a touchdown to tie the game. After the Bills punted on their next possession, Smith took over, carrying seven times for 61 yards on a march that ended with his 15-yard scoring jaunt to put Dallas ahead for good. Washington added a late interception that led to another Smith touchdown run.

Troy Aikman (8) launched the Cowboys' dominant run with an MVP performance against the Bills in Super Bowl XXVII.

Bill Frakes/Getty Images

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SUPER BOWL XXIX–XXXII

With his kickoff-return TD in the third quarter of Super Bowl XXXI, Desmond Howard (81) put the Packers on the path to victory.

Richard Mackson/Getty Images

SUPER BOWL XXIX

January 29, 1995
Joe Robbie Stadium | Miami
Attendance: 74,107

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
San Diego	7	3	8	8	**26**
San Francisco	14	14	14	7	**49**

MVP: Steve Young (QB), San Francisco
24 of 36 passing, 325 yards, 6 TDs

Steve Young passed for a Super Bowl-record six touchdowns as the 49ers topped the Chargers to become the first team to win five Super Bowls. The QB, who directed an explosive offense that generated seven TDs, 28 first downs, and 455 total yards, wasted little time getting his team on the scoreboard. He fired a 44-yard touchdown throw to Jerry Rice only three plays and 1:24 into the game, and made it 14-0 with a 51-yard pass to Rickey Watters on the 49ers' next possession. Both Rice and Watters scored three times in the win, and the 75 combined points set another Super Bowl record that still stands.

SUPER BOWL XXX

January 28, 1996
Sun Devil Stadium | Tempe
Attendance: 76,347

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Dallas	10	3	7	7	**27**
Pittsburgh	0	7	0	10	**17**

MVP: Larry Brown (CB), Dallas
2 interceptions, both leading to Cowboys touchdowns

Cornerback Larry Brown's two interceptions led to 14 second-half points, lifting the Cowboys to their third Super Bowl victory in four seasons and fifth title overall. Dallas scored on each of its first three possessions, taking a 13-0 lead behind Troy Aikman's 3-yard TD pass to Jay Novacek and two Chris Boniol field goals. The Steelers managed to stay close, pulling within 13-7 and then 20-17, but Brown's heroics kept Dallas ahead. Both of his pickoffs set up short scoring runs by Emmitt Smith, the second with just 3:43 remaining in the game.

SUPER BOWL XXXI

January 26, 1997
Superdome | New Orleans
Attendance: 72,301

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
New England	14	0	7	0	**21**
Green Bay	10	17	8	0	**35**

MVP: Desmond Howard (KR-PR), Green Bay, 244 return yards, 99-yard kickoff return for TD

The NFC's Super Bowl win streak reached 13 games, thanks to big plays from Brett Favre and Desmond Howard that fueled the Packers. Favre threw for two touchdowns and ran for a third, while Howard's 99-yard kickoff-return TD in the third quarter stemmed New England's momentum. On Green Bay's second play from scrimmage, Favre hit Andre Rison for a 54-yard touchdown, and he later connected with Antonio Freeman on an 81-yard strike. But it wasn't until Howard's return late in the third quarter – on the heels of Curtis Martin's 18-yard rushing TD – that the Packers' lead was safe.

SUPER BOWL XXXII

January 25, 1998
Qualcomm Stadium | San Diego
Attendance: 68,912

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Green Bay	7	7	3	7	**24**
Denver	7	10	7	7	**31**

MVP: Terrell Davis (RB), Denver
30 carries, 157 yards, 3 TDs

Terrell Davis rushed for 157 yards and a Super Bowl-record three touchdowns to lead the Broncos to their first NFL title and snap the NFC's streak of Super Bowl victories at 13. With the game knotted, 24-24, and just 3:27 left in regulation, the Broncos took over at the Packers 49. Davis rushed for 2 yards, and a 15-yard facemask penalty moved the ball to the Packers 32. Three plays later, Davis' 17-yard run brought the ball to the 1, and after a timeout, he waltzed into the end zone for the go-ahead score. Green Bay drove to the Broncos 31 in the waning seconds, but John Mobley knocked away Brett Favre's fourth-down pass to preserve the victory.

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SUPER BOWL XXXIII–XXXVI

Kathy Willens/AP Images

The Patriots' Adam Vinatieri (4) sealed one of the game's biggest upsets when his 48-yard field goal on the final play defeated the Rams in Super Bowl XXXVI.

SUPER BOWL XXXIII

January 31, 1999
Pro Player Stadium | Miami
Attendance: 74,803

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Denver	7	10	0	17	**34**
Atlanta	3	3	0	13	**19**

MVP: John Elway (QB), Denver
18 of 29 passing, 336 yards, 1 TD

Playing in his final game, John Elway shined while leading the Broncos to their second consecutive Super Bowl victory, the first AFC team to achieve that feat since the Steelers 19 years earlier. Denver took the lead early, with Elway's 41-yard pass to Rod Smith setting up Howard Griffith's short TD run. Elway then fired an 80-yard scoring strike to Smith to put the Broncos ahead 17-3. In the second half, Darrien Gordon dashed Atlanta's comeback hopes with interceptions on consecutive possessions that led to Denver touchdowns, the second of those a 3-yard Elway run making it 31-6.

SUPER BOWL XXXIV

January 30, 2000
Georgia Dome | Atlanta
Attendance: 72,625

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
St. Louis	3	6	7	7	**23**
Tennessee	0	0	6	10	**16**

MVP: Kurt Warner (QB), St. Louis
24 of 45 passing, 414 yards, 2 TDs

Mike Jones tackled the Titans' Kevin Dyson at the 1-yard line as time expired, securing the Rams' first Super Bowl title. For coach Dick Vermeil, the win came 19 years after he brought the Eagles to the Super Bowl, marking the longest stretch between Super Bowl appearances by a coach. St. Louis reached the red zone on each of its first six possessions, but could muster just three field goals and one touchdown. The Titans then rallied with two long TD drives and an Al Del Greco field goal to tie the game late in the fourth quarter. It was quickly untied on the next play from scrimmage, when Kurt Warner fired a 73-yard touchdown pass to Isaac Bruce. Tennessee then drove deep into Rams territory, only to come up empty when Jones wrapped up Dyson shy of the goal line.

SUPER BOWL XXXV

January 28, 2001
Raymond James Stadium | Tampa
Attendance: 71,921

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Baltimore	7	3	14	10	**34**
N.Y. Giants	0	0	7	0	**7**

MVP: Ray Lewis (LB), Baltimore
Star of a defense that allowed just 152 total yards

The Ravens' defense led the way by forcing five turnovers, recording four sacks, and not allowing an offensive touchdown as the franchise posted its first Super Bowl victory. There were 21 points scored in a dizzying 36-second span of the third quarter, starting when Baltimore's Duane Starks returned an interception 49 yards for a touchdown and a 17-0 Ravens lead. The Giants' Ron Dixon brought back the ensuing kickoff 97 yards for a score, but Jermaine Lewis matched it with a kickoff-return TD of his own. The Giants managed just one first down on their final four possessions.

SUPER BOWL XXXVI

February 3, 2002
Superdome | New Orleans
Attendance: 72,922

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
St. Louis	3	0	0	14	**17**
New England	0	14	3	3	**20**

MVP: Tom Brady (QB), New England
16 of 27 passing, 145 yards, 1 TD

Adam Vinatieri's 48-yard field goal proved the difference as the Patriots prevailed in the first Super Bowl in which the winning points were scored on the final play. Underdog New England had built a 17-3 lead, but the Rams tied things up with two fourth-quarter touchdowns – the second with just 1:30 to go – before Patriots QB Tom Brady positioned his team for the game-winning kick. He completed five passes on the drive, three of those to J.R. Redmond and another a 23-yarder to Troy Brown that brought the ball into St. Louis territory.

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SUPER BOWL XXXVII–XL

SUPER BOWL XXXVII

January 26, 2003
Qualcomm Stadium | San Diego
Attendance: 67,603

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Oakland	3	0	6	12	**21**
Tampa Bay	3	17	14	14	**48**

MVP: Dexter Jackson (S), Tampa Bay
2 of team's 5 interceptions

Tampa Bay intercepted five Raiders passes, three that were returned for touchdowns, on its way to the franchise's first Super Bowl title. After an early field goal, Oakland managed just two first downs on its next nine possessions while the Buccaneers rolled to 34 straight points. Keenan McCardell ignited a decisive sequence, catching TD passes on back-to-back drives that put his team ahead, 27-3. Dwight Smith brought back pickoffs of 44 and 50 yards for scores, and Derrick Brooks had a 44-yarder for a touchdown after the Raiders narrowed the deficit to 34-21 in the fourth quarter. The Bucs' defense limited Oakland to just 269 total yards – 19 on the ground – and Tampa Bay enjoyed a 37:14 to 22:46 advantage in time of possession.

SUPER BOWL XXXVIII

February 1, 2004
Reliant Stadium | Houston
Attendance: 71,525

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Carolina	0	10	0	19	**29**
New England	0	14	0	18	**32**

MVP: Tom Brady (QB), New England
32 of 48 passing, 354 yards, 3 TDs

Another Super Bowl classic went the Patriots' way when Adam Vinatieri's 41-yard field goal with four seconds to play lifted New England to its second championship in three years. While it took a Super Bowl-record 26 minutes, 55 seconds for the first points to be scored, the teams eventually combined for 868 total yards – 481 by the Patriots – and had the highest-scoring fourth quarter (37 points) in Super Bowl history. Carolina briefly moved in front on an 85-yard Muhsin Muhammad TD reception and later tied the game on Ricky Proehl's 12-yard scoring catch with 1:08 remaining. But Tom Brady answered by driving the Patriots into field goal range, aided by Deion Branch's clutch 17-yard reception.

SUPER BOWL XXXIX

February 6, 2005
Alltel Stadium | Jacksonville
Attendance: 78,125

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
New England	0	7	7	10	**24**
Philadelphia	0	7	7	7	**21**

MVP: Deion Branch (WR), New England
11 receptions, 133 yards

Behind a defense that forced four turnovers – including two fourth-quarter interceptions – the Patriots joined the Cowboys as the only teams to win three Super Bowls in a span of four seasons. New England took the lead for good early in the fourth quarter on a drive sparked by Kevin Faulk, who caught screen passes of 13 and 14 yards and added a 12-yard run. Corey Dillon capped the possession with his 2-yard touchdown run, and after Adam Vinatieri's 22-yard field goal made it 24-14, Tedy Bruschi and Rodney Harrison stepped up with interceptions that sealed the outcome.

SUPER BOWL XL

February 5, 2006
Ford Field | Detroit
Attendance: 68,206

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Seattle	3	0	7	0	**10**
Pittsburgh	0	7	7	7	**21**

MVP: Hines Ward (WR), Pittsburgh
5 receptions, 123 yards, 1 TD

The Steelers finally earned their "one for the thumb," becoming the first AFC team to win five Super Bowls. Holding a tenuous 14-10 fourth-quarter lead, the game's key sequence came when cornerback Ike Taylor picked off a pass to stop a Seahawks threat. Pittsburgh quickly cashed in when Antwaan Randle El, a quarterback in college, took a handoff, sprinted right, then stopped and fired a 43-yard strike to Hines Ward for the first Super Bowl TD pass thrown by a wide receiver. In the third quarter, the Steelers' Willie Parker burst free for a Super Bowl-record 75-yard touchdown run.

© Dexter Jackson (34) collected two of the Buccaneers' five interceptions in their Super Bowl XXXVII victory over the Raiders.

Ezra Shaw/Getty Images

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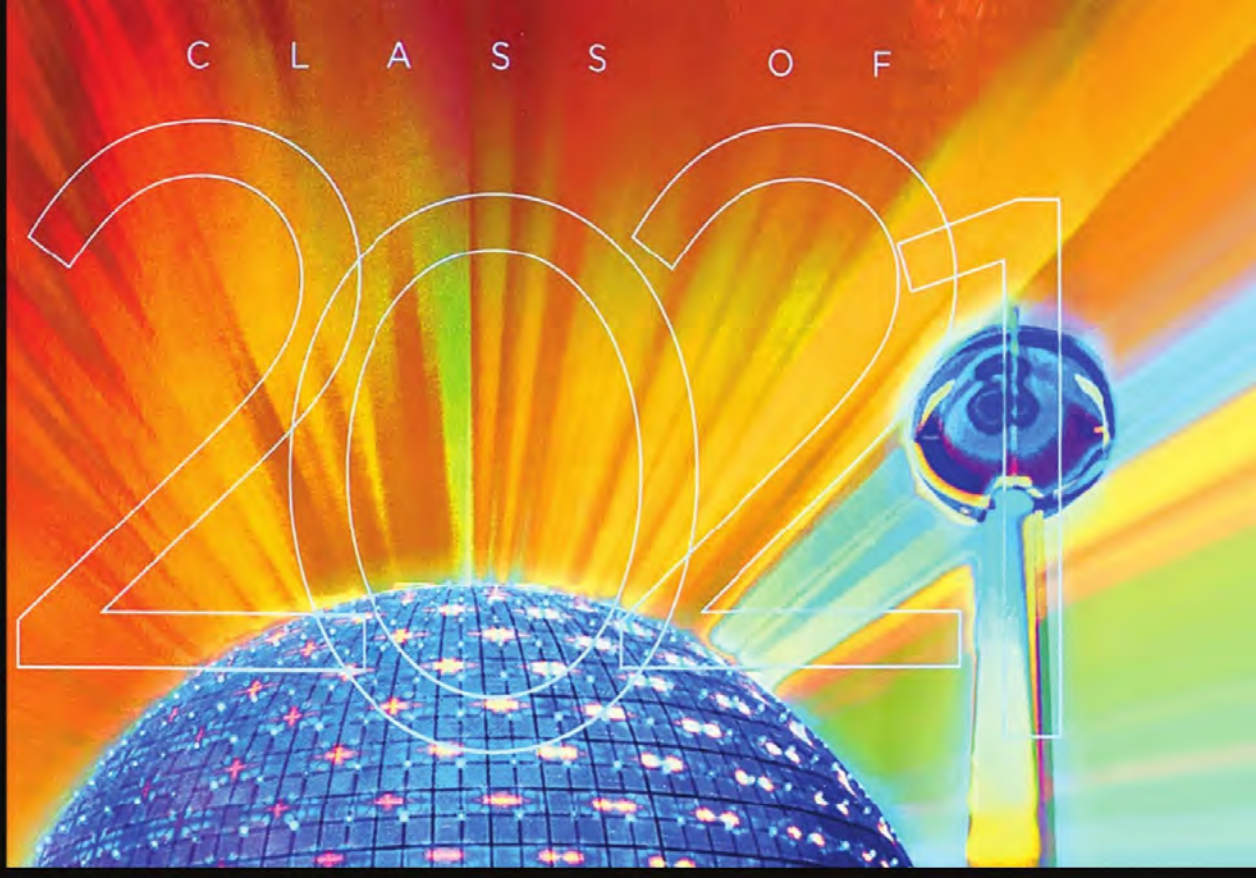

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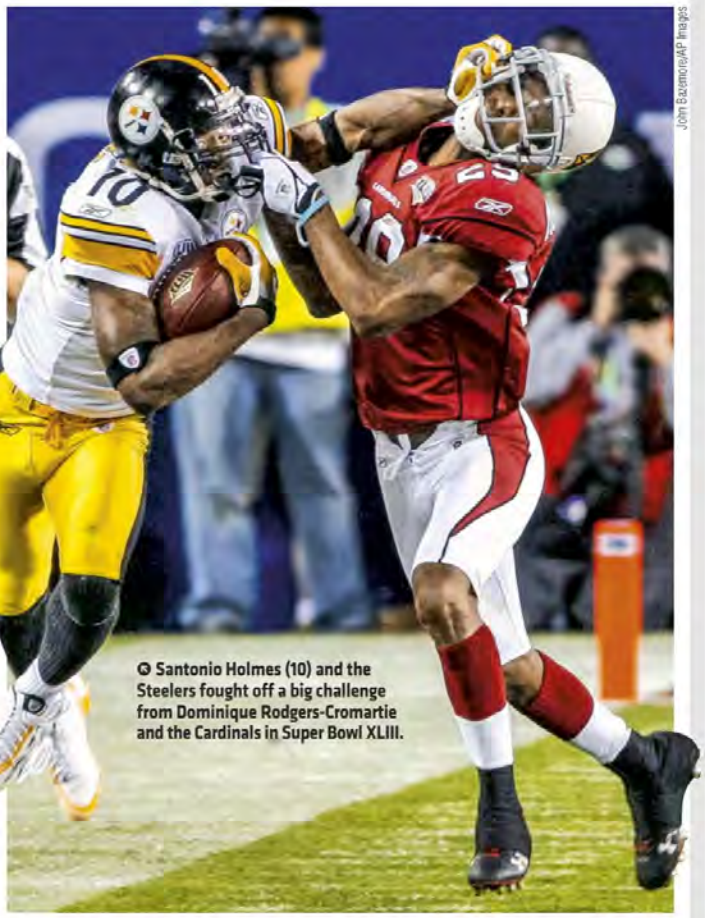
Behind the efforts of Peyton Manning (18), the Colts conquered the Bears in Super Bowl XLI to claim their first Super Bowl title in 36 seasons.



John Raoux/AP Images

Santonio Holmes (10) and the Steelers fought off a big challenge from Dominique Rodgers-Cromartie and the Cardinals in Super Bowl XLIII.

SUPER BOWL XLI

February 4, 2007
Dolphin Stadium | Miami Gardens
Attendance: 74,512

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Indianapolis	6	10	6	7	**29**
Chicago	14	0	3	0	**17**

MVP: Peyton Manning (QB), Indianapolis
25 of 38 passing, 247 yards, 1 TD

A wet and wild night of Super Bowl firsts brought Tony Dungy, Peyton Manning, and the Colts to the top of the NFL. Dungy became the first Black head coach to win the Super Bowl while directing the franchise to its first crown since relocating to Indianapolis in 1984. It was also the first Super Bowl title for Manning, whose career saw him set league marks for completions, passing yards, and passing TDs. The game also marked the first time the opening kickoff was run back for a touchdown, accomplished when the Bears' Devin Hester sped 92 yards to give his team the early lead.

SUPER BOWL XLII

February 3, 2008
Univ. of Phoenix Stadium | Glendale
Attendance: 71,101

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
N.Y. Giants	3	0	0	14	**17**
New England	0	7	0	7	**14**

MVP: Eli Manning (QB), New York
19 of 34 passing, 255 yards, 2 TDs

The Giants became the first NFC wild card team to win the Super Bowl, an achievement made possible by a relentless defense and David Tyree's brilliant 32-yard catch that set up the go-ahead touchdown. Plaxico Burress capped the winning drive with his 13-yard TD grab with 35 seconds to play, shocking a Patriots squad that entered the game 18-0 and had taken the lead just minutes earlier on Randy Moss' 6-yard touchdown reception. Michael Strahan, playing his final game, keyed a defense that produced five sacks, while the Giants' approach on offense included an opening drive that lasted a Super Bowl-record 9 minutes, 59 seconds.

SUPER BOWL XLIII

February 1, 2009
Raymond James Stadium | Tampa
Attendance: 70,774

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Pittsburgh	3	14	3	7	**27**
Arizona	0	7	0	16	**23**

MVP: Santonio Holmes (WR), Pittsburgh
9 receptions, 131 yards, 1 TD

In a game highlighted by clutch plays, the Steelers saved the biggest for last. The Cardinals nearly pulled off what would have been an historic comeback, scoring 16 points in a frenzied fourth quarter and taking the lead on Larry Fitzgerald's 64-yard touchdown catch with 2:37 to play. Pittsburgh answered with a 78-yard drive, winning the game on Ben Roethlisberger's 6-yard scoring pass to Santonio Holmes. The game also saw the Steelers' James Harrison return an interception 100 yards for a touchdown on the final play before halftime.

SUPER BOWL XLIV

February 7, 2010
Sun Life Stadium | Miami Gardens
Attendance: 74,059

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
New Orleans	0	6	10	15	**31**
Indianapolis	10	0	7	0	**17**

MVP: Drew Brees (QB), New Orleans
32 of 39 passing, 288 yards, 2 TDs

Lifting the spirits of a community recovering from Hurricane Katrina, the Saints capped a memorable season by edging the Colts for their first Super Bowl title. They did it with a daring play call to start the second half – an onside kick that was recovered by Chris Reis and set up a six-play drive that Drew Brees finished with a 16-yard TD pass to Pierre Thomas. Jeremy Shockey's fourth-quarter scoring grab moved New Orleans in front to stay, and Tracy Porter put the game away with his 74-yard interception-return touchdown with 3:12 remaining.

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SUPER BOWL XLV

February 6, 2011
Cowboys Stadium | Arlington
Attendance: 91,060

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Pittsburgh	0	10	7	8	**25**
Green Bay	14	7	0	10	**31**

MVP: Aaron Rodgers (QB), Green Bay
24 of 39 passing, 304 yards, 3 TDs

Aaron Rodgers threw three TD passes and Nick Collins returned an interception for another score, sparking the Packers to their fourth Super Bowl title. The Steelers had trailed, 21-3, but tallied two touchdowns to get close and were on the move again early in the fourth quarter. That's when Green Bay linebacker Clay Matthews stripped the ball from running back Rashard Mendenhall at the Packers 33 and teammate Desmond Bishop recovered. Rodgers then marched Green Bay to a quick TD that extended his team's lead to 28-17.

SUPER BOWL XLVI

February 5, 2012
Lucas Oil Stadium | Indianapolis
Attendance: 68,658

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
N.Y. Giants	9	0	6	6	**21**
New England	0	10	7	0	**17**

MVP: Eli Manning (QB), N.Y. Giants
30 of 40 passing, 296 yards, 1 TD

In the first Super Bowl to feature two starting quarterbacks who previously won the big game's MVP Award, Eli Manning and the Giants edged Tom Brady and the Patriots, scoring a late TD for the victory. Manning set a record by opening a Super Bowl with nine consecutive completions; Brady later put together a run of 16 completions in a row, breaking another Super Bowl mark. But with time counting down, Manning directed a nine-play, 88-yard drive that moved New York ahead to stay, capped when Ahmad Bradshaw ran for the winning touchdown with just under a minute to play.

SUPER BOWL XLVII

February 3, 2013
Mercedes-Benz Superdome
New Orleans
Attendance: 71,024

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Baltimore	7	14	7	6	**34**
San Francisco	3	3	17	8	**31**

MVP: Joe Flacco (QB), Baltimore
22 of 33 passing, 287 yards, 3 TDs

The Ravens built a big lead and then held on to hand the 49ers their first Super Bowl loss in six appearances. Joe Flacco threw three first-half TDs – capping a stellar 11-touchdown, zero-interception postseason – and Jacoby Jones opened the third quarter with a Super Bowl-record 108-yard kickoff-return touchdown that put Baltimore ahead, 28-6. The 49ers, however, would rally, scoring three second-half TDs and reaching the Ravens 5-yard line before being stopped on downs with under two minutes to play. Baltimore linebacker Ray Lewis added his name to the list of legends whose final game was a Super Bowl victory.

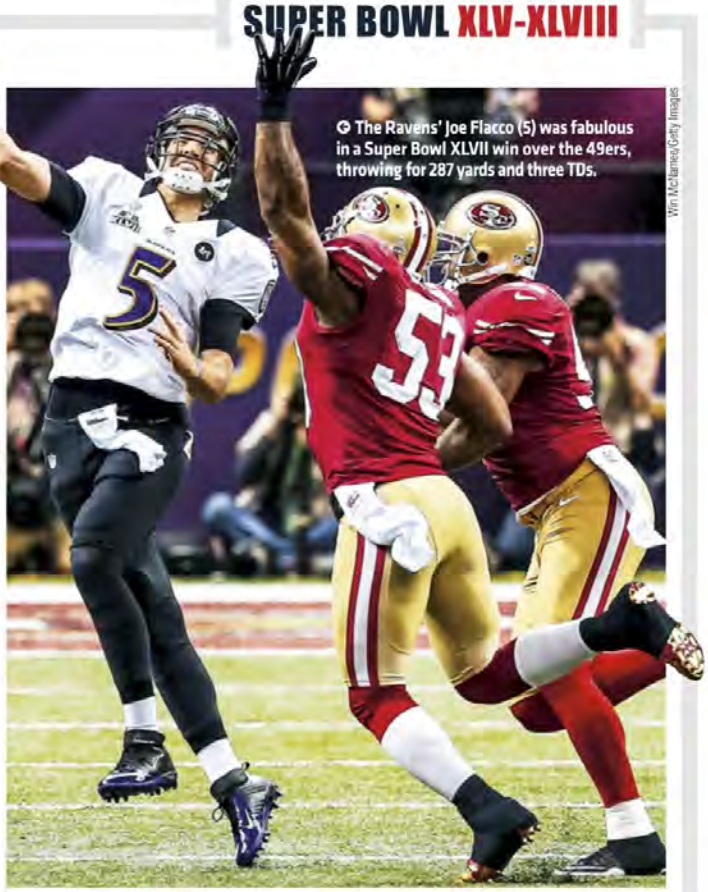
SUPER BOWL XLVIII

February 2, 2014
MetLife Stadium | East Rutherford
Attendance: 82,529

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Seattle	8	14	14	7	**43**
Denver	0	0	8	0	**8**

MVP: Malcolm Smith (LB), Seattle
9 tackles, 69-yard interception-return TD

In what was expected to be the first cold-weather Super Bowl – but instead kicked off in pleasant 49-degree conditions at MetLife Stadium – Seattle cruised past the Broncos. The game featured the quickest points to open a Super Bowl; the Seahawks scored on a safety just 12 seconds into the contest. More big plays followed. Seattle LB Malcolm Smith, the first defender in 11 years to be named the game's MVP, broke things open by bringing back a second-quarter interception 69 yards for a TD, and Percy Harvin returned the second-half kickoff 87 yards for another Seattle touchdown, making the score 29-0.



The Ravens' Joe Flacco (5) was fabulous in a Super Bowl XLVII win over the 49ers, throwing for 287 yards and three TDs.

Win McNamee/Getty Images

Malcolm Smith (53) sparked the Seahawks' defense in Super Bowl XLVIII, returning an interception 69 yards for a touchdown.

Gregory Bull/AP Images

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SUPER BOWL XLIX–LII

SUPER BOWL XLIX

February 1, 2015
Univ. of Phoenix Stadium | Glendale
Attendance: 70,288

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
New England	0	14	0	14	**28**
Seattle	0	14	10	0	**24**

MVP: Tom Brady (QB), New England
37 of 50 passing, 328 yards, 4 TDs

Tom Brady threw four touchdown passes, including the go-ahead score to Julian Edelman with 2:02 remaining, and Malcolm Butler intercepted a pass at the goal line with 20 seconds left to preserve the Patriots' fourth Super Bowl win. Brady's third TD throw was his 12th in the Super Bowl, breaking Joe Montana's career record. Still, Seattle nearly pulled off an improbable victory, moving deep into New England territory on Jermaine Kearse's acrobatic 33-yard catch, before Butler came up big two plays later, stepping in front of a pass for the game-saving interception. The Patriots became the first team to win the Super Bowl after trailing by double figures in the fourth quarter.

SUPER BOWL 50

February 7, 2016
Levi's Stadium | Santa Clara
Attendance: 71,088

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Carolina	0	7	0	3	**10**
Denver	10	3	3	8	**24**

MVP: Von Miller (LB), Denver
6 tackles, 2.5 sacks, 2 forced fumbles

Defense carried the day for the Broncos, who won their third Super Bowl title by flustering a Panthers offense that had scored an NFL-best 500 points during the regular season. Denver recorded seven sacks – equaling the Super Bowl record by a team – and linebacker Von Miller forced a pair of fumbles that led to the team's two TDs. The first was scooped up by teammate Malik Jackson in the end zone for a 10-0 lead; the second set up C.J. Anderson's short scoring run. T.J. Ward did his part, too, with seven tackles and one pass defensed. The victory was the 200th in Peyton Manning's career and made him the first starting QB to win Super Bowls with two different franchises.

SUPER BOWL LI

February 5, 2017
NRG Stadium | Houston
Attendance: 70,807

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	OT	F
New England	0	3	6	19	6	**34**
Atlanta	0	21	7	0	0	**28**

MVP: Tom Brady (QB), New England
43 of 62 passing, 466 yards, 2 TDs

New England staged the biggest comeback in Super Bowl history, rallying from a 25-point deficit late in the third quarter to prevail in overtime for the franchise's fifth championship. It would have been hard to imagine such an outcome after Matt Ryan's 6-yard touchdown pass to Tevin Coleman gave Atlanta a 28-3 lead, but Patriots QB Tom Brady – who became the first four-time Super Bowl MVP – made it happen. He threw TD passes to James White and Danny Amendola, Stephen Gostkowski kicked a 33-yard field goal, and a White touchdown run and a two-point conversion then tied it to cap a frantic final 17 minutes of regulation. White won the game with a 2-yard TD run on the first possession of overtime.

SUPER BOWL LII

February 4, 2018
U.S. Bank Stadium | Minneapolis
Attendance: 67,612

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Philadelphia	9	13	7	12	**41**
New England	3	9	14	7	**33**

MVP: Nick Foles (QB), Philadelphia
28 of 43 passing, 373 yards, 3 TDs;
1 TD reception

Zach Ertz's touchdown catch with 2:21 remaining put the Eagles ahead, but it took a big defensive play by Brandon Graham and Derek Barnett to preserve the franchise's first Super Bowl victory. Graham strip-sacked QB Tom Brady on the Patriots' next possession and Barnett recovered the loose ball. The game featured 1,151 total yards, the most ever in an NFL game, and Brady threw for a Super Bowl-record 505 yards. MVP Nick Foles became the first player to both throw and catch a TD pass in the Super Bowl.

No player has been on the Super Bowl stage more than Tom Brady (12), who has collected seven championship rings and five MVP honors, one of those for his play in the Patriots' Super Bowl XLIX win.

Gregory Payan/AP Images

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SUPER BOWL LIII–LVI

Sean McVay raises the Lombardi Trophy following the Rams' victory over the Bengals in Super Bowl LVI. At age 36, McVay became the youngest coach to win the Super Bowl.

Fred Beir c.J. Brown/Getty Images

SUPER BOWL LIII

February 3, 2019
Mercedes-Benz Stadium | Atlanta
Attendance: 70,081

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
New England	0	3	0	10	**13**
L.A. Rams	0	0	3	0	**3**

MVP: Julian Edelman (WR), New England
10 receptions, 141 yards

On the heels of the highest-scoring season in NFL history, the Patriots and the Rams tangled in the lowest-scoring Super Bowl ever seen. New England prevailed to capture its sixth Super Bowl crown – all since the 2001 season – to tie the Steelers for the all-time record. Sony Michel accounted for the game's lone touchdown, a 2-yard run midway through the fourth quarter that snapped a 3-3 tie and came one play after QB Tom Brady lofted a perfect pass to Rob Gronkowski for a 29-yard gain. Stephen Gostkowski then added a 41-yard field goal with 1:12 remaining to provide New England with a late cushion. In between those two scores, the Rams marched to the Patriots 27-yard line, but their threat ended when Jared Goff's pass deep down the right side was picked off by Stephon Gilmore.

SUPER BOWL LIV

February 2, 2020
Hard Rock Stadium | Miami Gardens
Attendance: 62,417

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
San Francisco	3	7	10	0	**20**
Kansas City	7	3	0	21	**31**

MVP: Patrick Mahomes (QB), Kansas City 26 of 42 passing, 286 yards, 2 TDs; 29 yards rushing, 1 TD

Kansas City erupted for three TDs in a span of 5:01 late in the fourth quarter to overtake the 49ers and win the franchise's first Super Bowl title in a half century. Patrick Mahomes threw touchdown passes to Travis Kelce and Damien Williams – the latter putting the Chiefs ahead – and Williams added a 38-yard scoring run with 1:12 remaining to pad the lead. San Francisco had snapped a halftime tie with a 42-yard Robbie Gould field goal and Raheem Mostert's 1-yard TD run, before Kansas City, facing its third double-digit deficit of the postseason, rallied. Williams rushed for a game-high 104 yards and Tyreek Hill caught nine of Mahomes' 26 completions.

SUPER BOWL LV

February 7, 2021
Raymond James Stadium | Tampa
Attendance: 24,835

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
Kansas City	3	3	3	0	**9**
Tampa Bay	7	14	10	0	**31**

MVP: Tom Brady (QB), Tampa Bay
21 of 29 passing, 201 yards, 3 TDs

Adding another chapter to his legendary career, quarterback Tom Brady directed the Buccaneers to a Super Bowl triumph in his first year with the team. It marked Brady's seventh career title, following six with the Patriots, and the fifth time he won the Rozelle Award as the game's MVP. He threw three first-half touchdown passes, two to longtime teammate Rob Gronkowski and the other to Antonio Brown just six seconds before intermission. Equally impressive was the Tampa Bay defense, which kept the Chiefs, who averaged nearly 30 ppg during the regular season, out of the end zone. Linebacker Devin White paced that effort with 12 tackles and an interception. Played against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, a crowd of nearly 25,000 was in attendance to see the Bucs become the first team to win the Super Bowl in its home stadium.

SUPER BOWL LVI

February 13, 2022
SoFi Stadium | Inglewood
Attendance: 70,048

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	F
L.A. Rams	7	6	3	7	**23**
Cincinnati	3	7	10	0	**20**

MVP: Cooper Kupp (WR), L.A. Rams
8 receptions, 92 yards, 2 TDs

Riding a defense that equaled a Super Bowl record with seven sacks – six of those after halftime – the Rams rallied late to upend the Bengals. Cooper Kupp caught four passes on the game-winning drive, including a 1-yard TD with 1:25 remaining that came shortly after he kept L.A.'s hopes alive with a 7-yard run on fourth-and-1. Rams QB Matthew Stafford threw three touchdown passes: two to Kupp and the other a 17-yarder to Odell Beckham Jr. to open the scoring. Cincinnati took a 17-13 lead on Joe Burrow's 75-yard TD pass to Tee Higgins 13 seconds into the third quarter, but its offense struggled after that, converting just 1-of-8 third downs the rest of the way. Aaron Donald and Von Miller each had two sacks for the victors, while at age 36, Sean McVay became the youngest Super Bowl-winning head coach.

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From 1920-1931, the NFL did not have postseason play, but a first-place tie in 1932 forced a "playoff" – and its success led the league to adopt a championship game format a year later. The AFL began play in 1960, and from 1966-1969 (before the merger), the two leagues held separate title games prior to the Super Bowl.

NFL CHAMPIONS

1920 .....Akron Pros
1921.....Chicago Staleys
1922.....Canton Bulldogs
1923.....Canton Bulldogs
1924 .....Cleveland Bulldogs
1925.....Chicago Cardinals
1926.....Frankford Yellow Jackets
1927.....New York Giants
1928 .....Providence Steam Roller
1929.....Green Bay Packers
1930 .....Green Bay Packers
1931 .....Green Bay Packers

1932.....@ Chicago Bears 9, Portsmouth Spartans 0
1933.....@ Chicago Bears 23, New York Giants 21
1934 .....@ New York Giants 30, Chicago Bears 13
1935.....@ Detroit Lions 26, New York Giants 7
1936*.....Green Bay Packers 21, Boston Braves 6
1937.....Washington Redskins 28, @ Chicago Bears 21
1938.....@ New York Giants 23, Green Bay Packers 17
1939.....@ Green Bay Packers 27, New York Giants 0
1940 .....Chicago Bears 73, @ Washington Redskins 0
1941.....@ Chicago Bears 37, New York Giants 9
1942 .....@ Washington Redskins 14, Chicago Bears 6
1943 .....@ Chicago Bears 41, Washington Redskins 21
1944 .....Green Bay Packers 14, @ New York Giants 7
1945 .....@ Cleveland Rams 15, Washington Redskins 14
1946 .....Chicago Bears 24, @ New York Giants 14
1947.....@ Chicago Cardinals 28, Philadelphia Eagles 21

Tony Tomsic/Getty Images

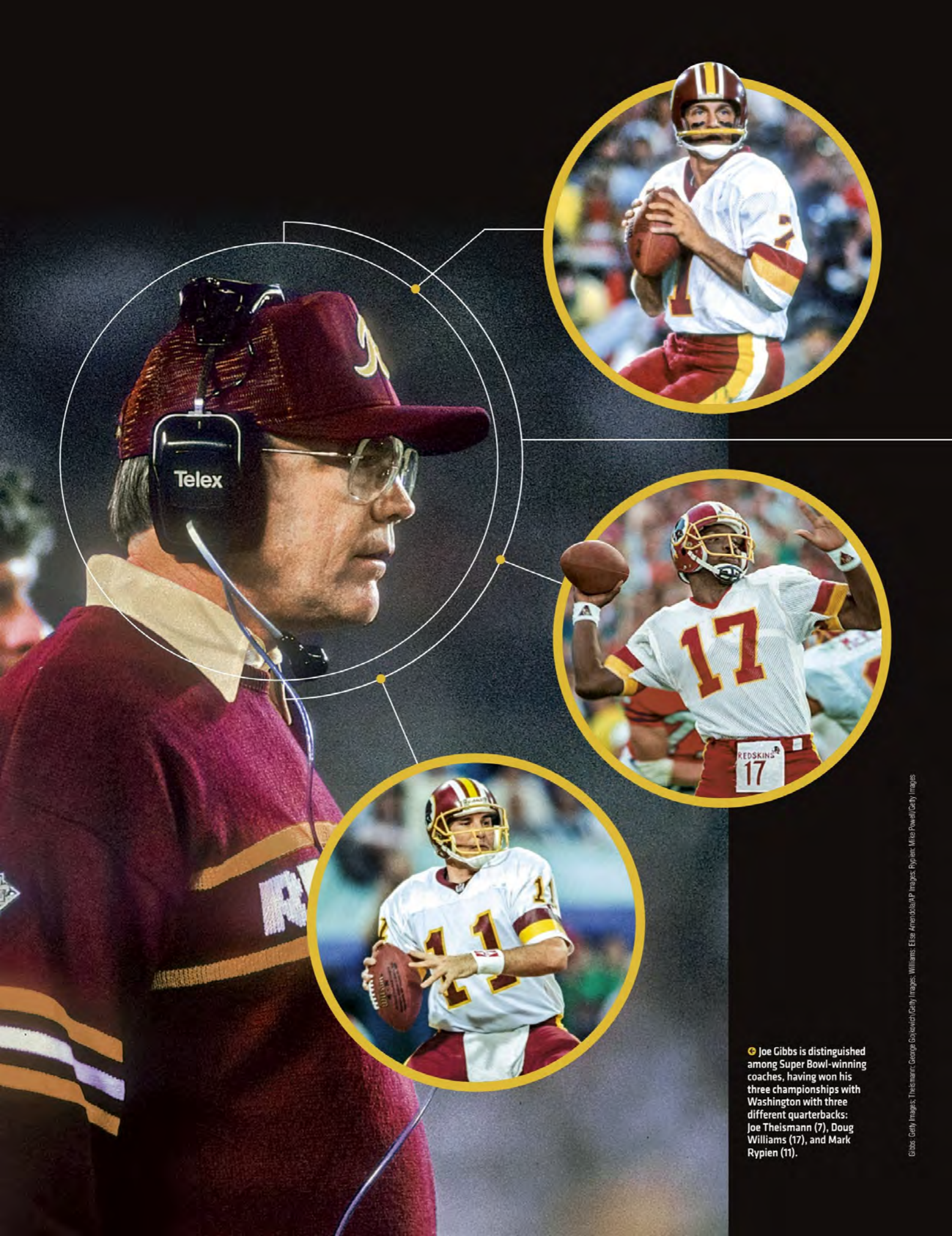
Tom Matte (41) powers across the goal line for a TD in the Colts' 34-0 victory over Cleveland in the 1968 NFL Championship Game. It marked the Colts' fourth shutout of the season and was their 15th win in 16 games, but two weeks later, they were defeated by the AFC champion Jets in Super Bowl III.

1948 .....@ Philadelphia Eagles 7, Chicago Cardinals 0
1949 .....Philadelphia Eagles 14, @ Los Angeles Rams 0
1950 .....@ Cleveland Browns 30, Los Angeles Rams 28
1951.....@ Los Angeles Rams 24, Cleveland Browns 17
1952.....Detroit Lions 17, @ Cleveland Browns 7
1953.....@ Detroit Lions 17, Cleveland Browns 16
1954 .....@ Cleveland Browns 56, Detroit Lions 10
1955.....Cleveland Browns 38, @ Los Angeles Rams 14
1956.....@ New York Giants 47, Chicago Bears 7
1957.....@ Detroit Lions 59, Cleveland Browns 14
1958 .....Baltimore Colts 23, @ New York Giants 17 (OT)
1959.....@ Baltimore Colts 31, New York Giants 16
1960 .....@ Philadelphia Eagles 17, Green Bay Packers 13
1961.....@ Green Bay Packers 37, New York Giants 0
1962.....Green Bay Packers 16, @ New York Giants 7
1963.....@ Chicago Bears 14, New York Giants 10
1964 .....@ Cleveland Browns 27, Baltimore Colts 0
1965.....@ Green Bay Packers 23, Cleveland Browns 12
1966 .....Green Bay Packers 34, @ Dallas Cowboys 27
1967.....@ Green Bay Packers 21, Dallas Cowboys 17
1968 .....Baltimore Colts 34, @ Cleveland Browns 0
1969.....@ Minnesota Vikings 27, Cleveland Browns 7

AFL CHAMPIONS

1960 .....@ Houston Oilers 24, Los Angeles Chargers 16
1961.....Houston Oilers 10, @ San Diego Chargers 3
1962.....Dallas Texans 20, @ Houston Oilers 17 (OT)
1963.....@ San Diego Chargers 51, Boston Patriots 10
1964 .....@ Buffalo Bills 20, San Diego Chargers 7
1965.....Buffalo Bills 23, @ San Diego Chargers 0
1966 .....Kansas City Chiefs 31, @ Buffalo Bills 7
1967.....@ Oakland Raiders 40, Houston Oilers 7
1968 .....@ New York Jets 27, Oakland Raiders 23
1969.....Kansas City Chiefs 17, @ Oakland Raiders 7

Held at the Polo Grounds (New York, N.Y.)



Joe Gibbs is distinguished among Super Bowl-winning coaches, having won his three championships with Washington with three different quarterbacks: Joe Theismann (7), Doug Williams (17), and Mark Rypien (11).

Gibbs: Getty Images; Theismann: George Gojkovich/Getty Images; Williams: Elise Amendola/AP Images; Rypien: Mike Powell/Getty Images

THE LIST OF HEAD COACHES WHO'VE WON MULTIPLE SUPER BOWL TITLES RUNS DEEP, BUT IT'S A UNIQUE FEAT WHEN THE ACCOMPLISHMENT COMES WITH DIFFERENT QUARTERBACKS.

BY CHAREAN WILLIAMS

UNCOMMON CONNECTION

JOE GIBBS KEEPS HIS three Super Bowl rings on display either at his NASCAR race shop in Huntersville, N.C., or at the NASCAR Hall of Fame in Charlotte. He always wears one, rotating the rings lest someone accuse him of playing favorites.

"I felt like they were all special in their own unique way," says Gibbs, who as head coach led Washington to wins in Super Bowls XVII, XXII, and XVI. "It's so hard to be able to put together a Super Bowl run, and it's so hard to win a Super Bowl. Every season you don't win one, it's a disappointment, and every year you do, it's special."

Gibbs' three Super Bowls differentiate him from any other Super Bowl-winning coach.

Sure, 12 other coaches have won multiple Super Bowls, and Bill Belichick (6) and Chuck Noll (4) have more Super Bowl titles than Gibbs. But no other coach in NFL history has won three Lombardi Trophies with three different starting quarterbacks.

"You don't really think about that when you're going through the years and working as hard as you do and everybody is focused on winning," Gibbs says. "All I know is when people started pointing that out after I got out of coaching the first go-round, I said, 'Yeah, but I had three great ones.' That's what kind of came back to me."

Washington won in the 1982 season with Joe Theismann at quarterback, in 1987 with Doug Williams, and in 1991 with Mark Rypien. Gibbs is in the Pro Football Hall of Fame, earning enshrinement in 1996, though none of his quarterbacks have a bust in Canton.

Former 49ers head coach George Seifert won his two Super Bowls with different quarterbacks, and while he isn't a Pro Football Hall of Famer, those two quarterbacks – Joe Montana and Steve Young – are.

Still, among all coaches with at least 100 regular-season victories, Seifert's .648 winning percentage ranks eighth, behind only George Allen, Bill Belichick, Paul Brown, Tony Dungy, George Halas, John Madden, and Don Shula – all except Belichick enshrined in Canton.

Seifert spent nine seasons as a 49ers assistant

George Seifert added to the 49ers' stash of Lombardi Trophies, leading them to the Super Bowl XXIV title with Joe Montana (top) at quarterback and the Super Bowl XXIX crown with Steve Young (bottom) behind center.

under Bill Walsh, including six as defensive coordinator. After Walsh moved into the team's front office as vice president of football operations, the 49ers promoted Seifert to head coach, and in his first season (1989), he had both Montana and Young on his roster.

"The quarterback is key," Seifert says. "We had a number of good players, but in football, the quarterback, in most cases, is the main guy. He's the one who can have such a dramatic impact on the game. So, obviously, those are two Hall of Fame quarterbacks and two of the best ones to ever play the game. I was fortunate to be in the right place at the right time."

In that first season, the 49ers demolished the John Elway-led Broncos, 55-10, in Super Bowl XXIV with Montana behind center. It made Seifert the first rookie head coach to win the title since the Baltimore Colts' Don McCafferty in Super Bowl V.

Young started for San Francisco in 1991 and '92 with Montana nursing an elbow injury. He won his first league MVP award in 1992, but it was not until Montana was traded to the Chiefs a year later that the 49ers became Young's team. In 1994, Young cemented his legacy and his spot in Canton.

The lasting image from the 49ers' 49-26 victory over the Chargers in Super Bowl XXIX was of Young, the league MVP and Super Bowl MVP, removing the proverbial monkey off his back in the waning minutes.

"We were happy for everybody, but it was particularly important for him," Seifert says. "He was following Joe Montana, and I had to follow Bill Walsh. When you're put in that situation, the standard is set pretty high. But when you do accomplish it, and you get the thing done as you're supposed to, then it's obviously rewarding. And if you don't, it can be pretty crushing."

The Giants had no winning tradition, no Super Bowl titles, and no Hall of Fame quarterback on their roster when defensive coordinator Bill Parcells took over as the team's head coach in 1983. And while they did have a first-round draft selection at QB, one of Parcells' first decisions was to replace Phil Simms with Scott Brunner. Simms requested a trade after his benching.

"When I wasn't named the starter, I knew I wasn't the favorite son, of course, and I'm not even saying Scott Brunner was either," Simms says. "I thought, 'Well, this is not going to work,' because I always felt that it was predetermined and kind of knew that was the way it was going in training camp and in preseason games. I certainly wasn't shocked by it, because I think that was kind of the mindset going in.

"Bill asked, 'What do you think about it?' I told him I didn't want to be a part of it, and I did mean it."

Parcells ignored Simms' trade request and called on him to replace Brunner in Week 6 against the Eagles. Simms badly injured his thumb during the game, costing him the rest of the season, but he started 125 games for the Giants over the next 10 seasons and won a Super Bowl.

"I really didn't see a lot of difference, and I had seen more of Brunner, so I went with him," Parcells says. "Phil got mad, and I don't blame him. That was a mistake on my part, to tell you the truth, because Simms was really a good quarterback. I didn't know it at the time, but I got to know it a year later when he took over in '84, and then he played eight straight years after that without really being hurt.

"He's an underrated guy. He could throw every pass, and he was very accurate. I'm glad I had him."

Behind a defense led by Lawrence Taylor and with Simms at quarterback, the Giants went 14-2 in the 1986 regular season before beating the 49ers (49-3), Washington (17-0), and Denver (39-20, in Super Bowl XXI). Parcells received the first celebratory Gatorade bath.

Having Simms for the postseason four years later might have made the Giants' Super Bowl XXV run easier, but he broke his foot in Week 15 against the Bills. The Giants had gone 11-3 with Simms at quarterback, and he owned the NFC's highest passer rating at 92.7, but Jeff Hostetler was called upon to finish the season. The Giants trounced the Bears, 31-3, in the divisional round, used a last-second field goal to defeat the 49ers in the NFC title game, and then came away as league champs when the Bills missed their last-second field-goal attempt in Super Bowl XXV.

"I had quite a bit of confidence in Jeff," says Parcells, who earned enshrinement in the Hall of Fame in 2013. "He had been with us seven

Seifert: Otto Greule Jr /Getty Images. Montana: Lennox McLendon/AP Images. Young: Doug Mills/AP Images

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Bill Parcells was a two-time Super Bowl winner while coaching the Giants, capturing Super Bowl XXI with Phil Simms (11) at quarterback and, four years later, after Simms suffered a late-season injury, turning to Jeff Hostetler (15) for their Super Bowl XXV run.

years, so it wasn't like he was some youngster. And I told the team, 'We're not going to lose in the playoffs because of Hostetler. It's going to be one of you so-and-so's if we don't (win).' Not only was I confident in him, but I wanted the team to know I was. It worked out well for us."

Gibbs' hiring by Washington general manager Bobby Beathard in 1981 worked out well for both coach and team, but not until they went through an 0-5 start. Washington recovered to finish Gibbs' first season 8-8 and would have entered 1982 on a wave of momentum if not for the 57-day players' strike.

The team still went 8-1 in the abbreviated season with Theismann at quarterback, and then won its four postseason games by an average of 19 points. Washington beat the Dolphins, 27-17, in Super Bowl XVII.

"To go to four world championships in a 10-year period and win three of them is phenomenal," Theismann says. "It speaks to Joe's adaptability with his quarterbacks. I guess I was his experiment. I was the guinea pig they bring into the lab and say, 'What can we do with this thing?'

"In 1981, when we were 0-5, and he was about to bench me, I drove to his house, and we had a sit-down. He really didn't know me. He only knew what people said about me, and he didn't really understand my commitment and my love for football. I loved what he was talking about with the offense, but we didn't have the personnel to run the [Chargers'] offense. He put together a game plan based on our capabilities."

Two years after Theismann's career ended, Washington won its second Super Bowl.

When the team drafted Jay Schroeder in the third round in 1984 as the heir apparent to Theismann, who was 35 at the time, Gibbs had no idea the future would come as soon as it did. Giants linebacker Lawrence Taylor ended Theismann's career on a hit in a 1985 game, shattering the quarterback's right leg.

Gibbs convinced Doug Williams to sign with Washington to back up Schroeder in 1986 when the USFL shut down. Williams appeared in one game that season, attempting one pass, while Schroeder made the Pro Bowl.

Williams lost both starts he made in place of the injured Schroeder in the strike-shortened 1987 season, but he had three relief victories, including in the regular-season finale. Gibbs named Williams the starter for the postseason, and Williams became the first Black quarterback to win a Super Bowl as Washington shredded the Broncos, 42-10, in Super Bowl XXII.

"It's got to mean something to you being the first," Williams says. "Playing in the Super Bowl itself is great, but everybody remembers the first. There's nothing like being the first. Nobody is going to forget it. I'm glad I had that opportunity, but it's something that should have been done earlier."

Williams started only 12 more games for the team before Mark Rypien took over. A sixth-round selection in 1986, Rypien was buried on the depth chart until Washington traded Schroeder to the Raiders following the '87 season and Williams struggled with injuries. Rypien made his first Pro Bowl in 1989 and three years later led Washington to a 37-24 win over the Bills in Super Bowl XXVI.

"Joe Gibbs always believed in the quarterback he had," Williams says. "I wasn't Theismann; Theismann wasn't me. I wasn't Mark Rypien, and Mark Rypien wasn't me. But Joe Gibbs was so good at working with whoever he had."

Twenty-eight years have passed since Seifert joined Gibbs and Parcells in winning multiple Super Bowls with multiple quarterbacks. Active Super Bowl-winning coaches Bill Belichick, Mike Tomlin, Mike McCarthy, John Harbaugh, Doug Pederson, and Pete Carroll now all have different quarterbacks than they did when they won their last ring. Sean McVay still is young after winning Super Bowl LVI in his fifth season, and Sean Payton could return to the NFL after sitting out the 2022 season. So, maybe it happens again one day … but it won't be easy.

"It's a great compliment to a coach when you do it with more than one quarterback," Simms says. "There are so many things that go into it just to win one Super Bowl with one quarterback. Very few coaches go from one quarterback and continue winning with another. Usually when the quarterback leaves, the string ends, and we move on to the next team. It was just well done by all three."

Charean Williams, *who works for NBC Sports/Pro Football Talk, has covered the NFL for 29 years. She has been a Pro Football Hall of Fame selector since 2007.*

Parcells: Rich Pilling/Getty Images; Simms: Reed Saxon/AP Images; Hostetler: Olga Shalygin/AP Images

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Emmitt Smith was crucial to the Cowboys' comeback victory against the Bills in Super Bowl XXVIII, rushing for 132 yards and two second-half touchdowns on his way to the game's MVP honors.

Larry Keess Jr./Getty Images

BACK IN THE DAY

DURING THE SUPER BOWL'S FORMATIVE YEARS, A DOMINANT GROUND GAME WAS ESSENTIAL TO A TEAM'S TITLE HOPES.

BY D. ORLANDO LEDBETTER

THE IMPACT THAT RUNNING BACKS HAD on early Super Bowls can be captured in a single play from 40 years ago.

That's when John Riggins broke loose for perhaps the greatest run in Super Bowl history.

It was Super Bowl XVII at the Rose Bowl, and Washington trailed Miami, 17-13, early in the fourth quarter. With his team facing a fourth-and-1 from the Dolphins 43, coach Joe Gibbs faced a huge decision: punt to try to pin Miami deep in its own territory, or go for it and risk giving the Dolphins excellent field position with the chance to put the game away.

He chose the latter and smartly put the ball in the hands of Riggins, his bruising running back who was hammering the exclamation point on a stellar postseason with a mind-boggling 38-carry, 166-yard day.

Picking up several key blocks from the "Hogs" (Washington's burly offensive line), Riggins busted around the left side. He gained the needed yards for a first down but eyed more as Miami cornerback Don McNeal, outweighed by more than 40 pounds, came up to make the stop. The defender went in too high and slid off Riggins, who turned on the jets and outraced safety Lyle Blackwood for the go-ahead touchdown.

Marcus Allen evaded Washington defenders throughout Super Bowl XVIII, rushing for what was a then-Super Bowl record 191 yards – highlighted by a 74-yard TD run – in the Raiders' 38-9 win. Larry Csonka was the first running back to be named Super Bowl MVP, earning the honor after his 145-yard, two-touchdown performance against the Vikings in Super Bowl VIII.

"Riggins, to me, had the most significant performance (by a running back in the Super Bowl)," says Hall of Fame general manager Bill Polian, architect of Super Bowl teams in Buffalo, Carolina, and Indianapolis. "He had the most effect on the game. Washington controlled [the clock] with his ability to pound the ball."

"It was a hard-fought game," noted Dolphins coach Don Shula in *The Ultimate Super Bowl Book* by Bob McGinn. "[It] boiled down to the one play. Two plays, really. The Riggins run and the (Joe) Theismann strip of (Kim) Bokamper on the interception."

Shula knew first-hand the importance of running backs in pro football's biggest game. The Dolphins literally grounded out back-to-back victories in Super Bowls VII and VIII, running the ball a combined 90 times while throwing only 18 passes – numbers that are unfathomable in today's NFL.

In the latter of those wins, a 24-7 decision over Minnesota, fullback Larry Csonka rushed 33 times for 145 yards and two touchdowns to become the first running back honored with the game's MVP award. He credited center Jim Langer and guards Bob Kuechenberg and Larry Little with dominating Minnesota's front.

"I went through that line probably a dozen times untouched," Csonka remembers. "Look at the film for the rest of the season of Minnesota; no one did that to them."

Big backs who could pound it between the tackles were essential in those days. And if the offense could change pace with a shifty back able to reverse field and outrun the entire defense, it made for a lethal one-two punch.

Proving that point, running backs were named MVP in seven of the first 32 Super Bowls. But the game has changed. Not only has no back won the award since Terrell Davis in Super Bowl XXXII, there have been only eight 100-yard rushing performances in the past 24 Super Bowls, the most recent being the Chiefs' Damien Williams (104 yards) three years ago.

One year after Csonka's MVP performance, the Steelers' Franco Harris matched the feat, carrying the ball 34 times for 158 yards and a TD in a 16-6 triumph over the Vikings in Super Bowl IX. Harris, who would be victorious in all four of his Super Bowl appearances, still holds the marks for career rushing attempts (101) and career rushing yards (354) in the Super Bowl.

And one year after Riggins' breakaway fourth-down run, irony struck. Washington was back in the Super Bowl, this time facing the Raiders, and Riggins was handed the ball on a fourth down at the Raiders 26 trying to get his team back in the game. But linebacker Rod Martin stuffed the off-tackle play, giving the ball to the offense.

Moments later, Raiders running back Marcus Allen delivered a you-had-to-see-it-to-believe-it 74-yard sprint for a touchdown that capped the scoring in his team's 38-9 victory. He initially ran a sweep to his left, but the play was well-defended, so he abruptly made a diagonal cutback to dodge diving strong safety Ken Coffey and then turned into overdrive and beat the defense to the end zone. Allen finished with 191 rushing yards and was rewarded with the Super Bowl XVIII MVP.

On the eve of Super Bowl XXV, if one were to predict which back would more likely be MVP, Buffalo's Thurman Thomas would have been the unanimous choice. And while he did rush for a game-high 135 yards, it was the Giants' Ottis Anderson who walked away with the honor as part of his team's 20-19 victory. Pressed into duty when rookie Rodney Hampton suffered a fractured fibula in the divisional playoffs, Anderson became vital to the game plan to keep the Bills' dynamic offense off the field.

The 34-year-old grounded out the tough yards, keeping the chains and clock moving and allowing the Giants to amass a 40:33-to-19:27 time-of-possession advantage. Anderson finished with 102 rushing yards and a touchdown – along with five receptions – on his way to the award.

"Basically, we were trying to let the air out of the ball," Giants offensive coordinator Ron Erhardt said in *The Ultimate Super Bowl Book*. "We felt we had to do something to slow this outfit down. We said, 'Let's make this a ball-control game.' And we did."

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Ottis Anderson was crucial to the Giants' ball-control game plan against the Bills in Super Bowl XXV. His 21 carries for 102 yards helped New York's offense keep possession for more than 40 minutes. One of the most famous runs in Super Bowl history is John Riggins' 43-yard touchdown that propelled Washington to victory over the Dolphins in Super Bowl XVII.

SUPER BOWL MVP RUNNING BACKS

Running backs were named MVP in seven of the first 32 Super Bowls, but haven't won the award in the past 24 years.

PLAYER (TEAM)	SB/OPP.	ATT.	YDS.	AVG.	TD	LONG
Larry Csonka (Dolphins)	**VIII**/Vikings	33	145	4.4	2	16
Franco Harris (Steelers)	**IX**/Vikings	34	158	4.6	1	25
John Riggins (Redskins)	**XVII**/Dolphins	38	166	4.4	1	43
Marcus Allen (Raiders)	**XVIII**/Redskins	20	191	9.6	2	74
Ottis Anderson (Giants)	**XXV**/Bills	21	102	4.9	1	24
Emmitt Smith (Cowboys)	**XXVIII**/Bills	30	132	4.4	2	15
Terrell Davis (Broncos)	**XXXII**/Packers	30	157	5.2	3	27

The next running back to earn Super Bowl MVP honors was anything but a surprise. Emmitt Smith, in the early stages of a career that saw him become the league's all-time leading rusher, keyed Dallas' 30-13 victory over the Bills in Super Bowl XXVIII, rushing 30 times for 132 yards and two touchdowns.

The Cowboys trailed, 13-6, at halftime, but the team's coaches – offensive coordinator Norv Turner and defensive coordinator Butch Davis – made fluid adjustments.

"The big thing that helped a lot was the mind-shift of the coaches," Smith says. "Norv Turner and (head coach) Jimmy Johnson knew we needed to get control of the football game, and the best way we could do it was to actually run the ball."

Smith remembers the team leaning on him after James Washington returned a fumble 46 yards for a game-tying touchdown early in the third quarter. On Dallas' next possession, he carried the ball on seven of the eight plays, the last of those a 15-yard scoring run that put Dallas ahead.

"That one particular drive is the one that gained control of the whole game," says Smith, who added a 1-yard TD run in the fourth quarter. "That set the tone for the second half, and everything just turned in our favor from that point."

The most recent running back to earn Super Bowl MVP honors may have turned in the most impressive performance of all. Fighting off a migraine that sent him to the locker room during the first half, Denver's Terrell Davis rushed 30 times for 157 yards and a Super Bowl-record three touchdowns as the Broncos upset the Green Bay Packers in Super Bowl XXXII.

"You get guys made up like Terrell Davis, and you win championships," says Mike Shanahan, Davis' coach in Denver. "He played great during the regular season, but when he went to the playoffs, that's when he separated himself."

Pro football has changed a great deal since Davis raised the Rozelle Trophy at San Diego's Qualcomm Stadium. Of the last 24 Super Bowl MVPs, 15 have been quarterbacks and five have been receivers. And with the aerial game now dominating the league, there's a belief the running back position has been de-emphasized.

"I'm a bit of a contrarian in that regard," Polian says. "The studies that I've done – and they're up to date – indicate that you should take running backs high (in the draft). … The idea that the great ones are available anywhere in the draft is fallacious."

Successful teams still need a bell-cow running back or backfield tandem. Of the top 10 rushing teams in the NFL in 2021, seven reached the postseason. The AFC champion Bengals rode the legs of Joe Mixon, whose 1,205 rushing yards and 13 rushing TDs were career bests, while the Super Bowl-winning Rams' two-headed ground attack of Sony Michel and Darrell Henderson amassed more than 1,500 yards during the regular season.

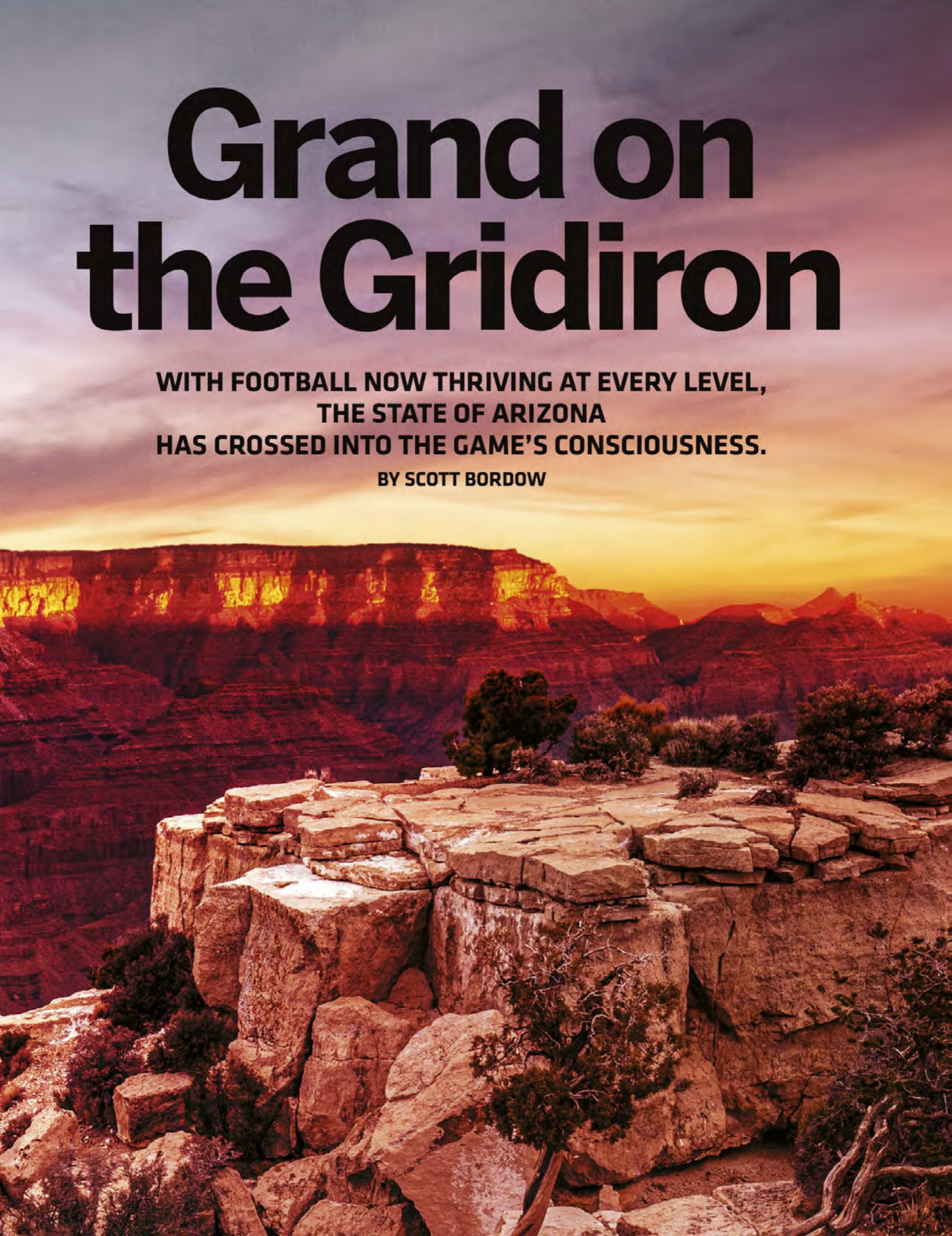
"If you're going to win in a 17-game schedule and in a seven-team playoff, you have to run the ball," Polian says. "You have to run it convincingly. The better the play at that position, the better off you are."

D. Orlando Ledbetter, *the longtime Atlanta Falcons beat writer for the* Atlanta Journal-Constitution, *also has covered the Cincinnati Bengals and Green Bay Packers. The award-winning sportswriter has served as the president of the Professional Football Writers of America (2013-15).*

Grand on the Gridiron

WITH FOOTBALL NOW THRIVING AT EVERY LEVEL, THE STATE OF ARIZONA HAS CROSSED INTO THE GAME'S CONSCIOUSNESS.

BY SCOTT BORDOW

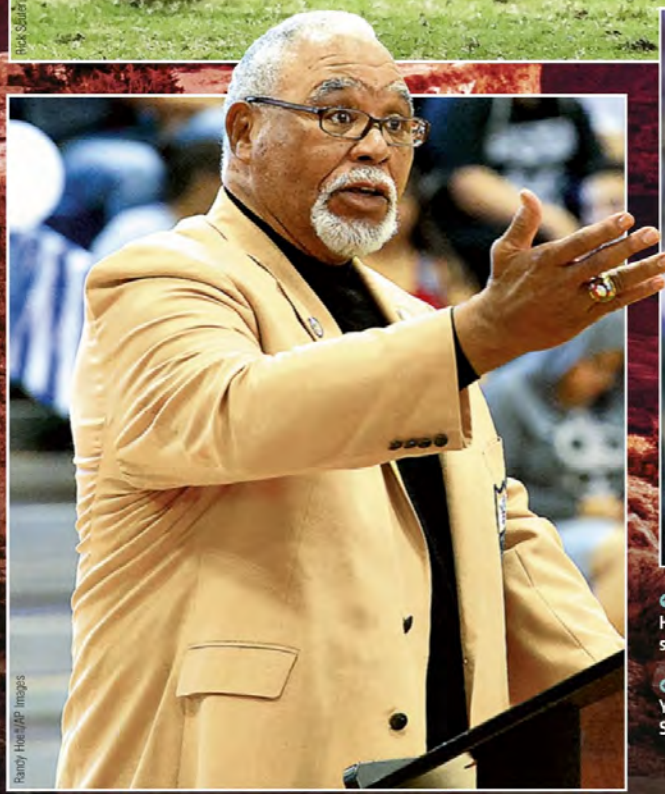


Mesa-born Danny White, who starred at Arizona State and then in the NFL, was named the Arizona Athlete of the Century by the *Arizona Republic*.

AP Images

Wide receiver Christian Kirk was born in Scottsdale and spent his first four NFL seasons with the Cardinals before signing with Jacksonville in 2022.

Rick Scuteri/AP Images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Julio Cortez/AP Images

While playing at Scottsdale's Desert Mountain High School, Ravens tight end Mark Andrews set the state high school record for career receptions.

Pro Football Hall of Famer Curley Culp was born in Yuma. His 14-year AFL/NFL career included winning Super Bowl IV as a member of the Kansas City Chiefs.

Jim Prisching/AP Images

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Ross D. Franklin/AP Images

Ryan Fitzpatrick's football journey took him from Gilbert's Highland High School to Harvard University to nine different teams during a 17-year NFL career, where he threw 223 touchdown passes and for nearly 35,000 yards.

Before embarking on a Pro Football Hall of Fame career with the Vikings and the Buccaneers, Randall McDaniel attended Agua Fria High School in Avondale and was a member of Arizona State's first Rose Bowl team in 1987.

Trevor Lawrence runs for a TD during Clemson's 2019 win over Ohio State in the College Football Playoffs at State Farm Stadium. The venue has hosted three CFP semifinals and one championship game since 2014.

MAX HALL WAS WALKING DOWN A HALLWAY on the Mesa Mountain View High School campus when his cell phone rang.

It was the spring of 2003, shortly after Hall, a junior quarterback, had led the Toros to a 14-0 record and the 5A state championship while being named Offensive Player of the Year. On the line was Robin Pflugrad, the assistant head coach and recruiting coordinator at Washington State.

"What's up, coach?" Hall said.

After a few pleasantries, Pflugrad came to the point.

"We want to offer you a full ride to Washington State," he said.

Hall's response?

"What does that mean?" he asked.

"I had no idea," Hall now recalls with a laugh. "He was like, 'Well, we'll pay for your schooling. We want you to play football here.' And I'm like, 'Oh, OK, cool. Thanks.'

"I immediately called my dad and said, 'What does this mean?' My dad's like, 'Call him back. That's a big deal.'"

Hall, who eventually played at BYU and later for the Arizona Cardinals and in the Canadian Football League, says he had never spoken to Pflugrad prior to that conversation. He had no idea Washington State was interested in him. Perhaps that's because the state of Arizona was not exactly a recruiting hotbed. In fact, recruiters saw Arizona as a pit stop on their way to the prospect-rich grounds of California.

Fast forward to 2019. Arizona high school quarterbacks could be found at Division I colleges across the country: Spencer Rattler at Oklahoma; Brock Purdy at Iowa State; Bryce Perkins at Virginia; Brian Lewerke at Michigan State; Tyler Shough at Oregon; Kedon Slovis at USC … the list went on and on.

If you're trying to explain the growth of football in Arizona, that's not a bad place to start.

"Oh my gosh, it's a ginormous explosion,"

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says Dan Manucci, who played for Tempe McClintock High School in the early 1970s and is now a private quarterback coach in the Phoenix area. "If we were planting seeds back in those days growing a football, now we have an abundant harvest, and the fields are just rows and rows and acres and acres of football."

"It's absolutely come a long way," adds Hall, now the assistant athletic director at American Leadership Academy, a charter school based in Queen Creek. "It really is amazing."

Arizona finds itself at the center of the football universe as it hosts Super Bowl LVII. Many of the state's delights – the beautiful desert landscape, the active Scottsdale nightlife, the, yes, 70-degree sunshine in January and February – are a Chamber of Commerce commercial.

other – that tripled its number of five-star high school recruits from 2015 to 2019.

"It's become huge," says Jaguars wide receiver Christian Kirk, who played high school football for Scottsdale Saguaro and spent the first four years of his NFL career with the Cardinals. "Being a hometown kid, it's been great to see the sport grow. I feel very blessed to be a part of it."

Yet, it wasn't so long ago – 1977 to be exact – that football in the Copper State was somewhat barren. Arizona State University wouldn't join the Pac-10 until 1978. The NFL's Cardinals didn't arrive in the Valley until 1988, and State Farm Stadium, the much-needed state-of-the-art facility, wasn't opened until 2006.

The evolution of the sport, from the preps all

school football in the state also is on the rise. The number of high school football players increased by more than 500 from 2018 to 2019, and there are 240 programs in the state, 10 more than in 2017.

Former NFL quarterback Ryan Fitzpatrick, who was born in Gilbert and still makes the Valley his home, said that when he first started playing tackle football in 1992, the town's population was 30,000. In 2021, 270,000 people lived there.

"It's insane," Fitzpatrick says. "It's almost a different place."

Give the weather an assist as well. The city of Phoenix averages 300 sunny days a year. The climate allows high school athletes to train January through December, even in the

"BEING A HOMETOWN KID, IT'S BEEN GREAT TO SEE THE SPORT GROW. I FEEL VERY BLESSED TO BE A PART OF IT."

— SCOTTSDALE NATIVE AND JAGUARS WIDE RECEIVER CHRISTIAN KIRK, ON FOOTBALL'S POPULARITY IN ARIZONA

Rob Schumacher/USA TODAY Sports

Scottsdale Saguaro High School's Deric English (11) catches a pass during a 2021 contest against California's Sierra Canyon. There are now 240 high school football programs in Arizona, including Scottsdale Saguaro and Chandler, both ranked in the nation's top-10 last fall.

100-plus-degree dog days of summer.

"The summer months are pretty brutal," Kirk admits, "but it definitely does help being able to practice year-round, especially when you're dedicating your life to it."

The opportunity to practice 365 days a year has had a two-pronged effect.

First, Arizona is the site of numerous 7-on-7 and Big Man camps; the camps accelerate the development of players and attract recruiters from across the country.

Second, Arizona has become a mecca for private quarterback coaches, including Manucci, Mike Giovando, and former NFL signal-callers Rudy Carpenter and Donovan McNabb. Imagine how that helps a 16-year-old with designs on playing college football – or on Sundays.

"It's a totally different deal," says former Cowboys quarterback Danny White, who played for Mesa Westwood High School in the late 1960s. "I didn't have a tutor or private coaches or anything like that.

"It's unbelievable. I'm helping out at Mountain View, and these quarterbacks go to

The game also reaffirms Arizona's rise in the sport's landscape. Consider that Super Bowl LVII is the fourth Super Bowl to be played in Arizona and that the Fiesta Bowl is part of the College Football Playoff rotation, hosting three semifinal games since 2016 (including last season's TCU-Michigan contest). Arizona also is one of only two states – Kentucky being the

the way to pros, can be traced to several factors.

According to U.S. Census data, Arizona was the nation's fourth fastest-growing state (1.4 percent) in 2021, and Phoenix and the city of Buckeye had two of the top seven population booms – 13,224 and 8,001, respectively – from July 1, 2020, to July 1, 2021.

It's no coincidence that participation in high

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State Farm Stadium was the site of Super Bowl XLIX when Malcolm Butler (21) made a goal-line interception to clinch the Patriots' victory over Seattle.

The NFL arrived in Arizona in 1988 when the Cardinals, the league's oldest franchise, relocated from St. Louis.

all the camps they can go to, and the reward (a possible college scholarship) at the end of the day is huge. And then with the weather, everybody comes here or Florida or California for these camps. That's a big deal, too."

Fitzpatrick, whose son plays at Chandler Basha High School, visited a nearby junior high in August and was shocked when he saw McNabb coaching three quarterbacks.

"It's not just a year-round commitment, but who you're working with outside the high school commitment," Fitzpatrick says. "There are plusses and minuses to that, but just the talent I'm seeing at Basha, the size and the speed and strength of some of these kids, is a lot different [than when I was in high school]."

Growth, sunshine, and opportunity. Combine those factors and you get something unheard of in Arizona high school football just 15 years ago: Two teams, Chandler High and Scottsdale Saguaro, were ranked in the top-10 nationally before the 2022 season began.

College football in Arizona prior to the Fiesta Bowl's inception in 1971 was strictly local. Arizona State University, the University of Arizona, and Northern Arizona University were all anyone talked about.

But that all changed on Jan. 2, 1987, when the Fiesta Bowl hosted the national championship game between No. 1-ranked Miami and No 2. Penn State.

It was the final game of the 1986 season, played in prime time on a Friday night, and included the spectacle of Miami players wearing fatigues and walking out of a steak fry where Penn State was also dining in the days leading up to the game.

The game, won by Penn State, 14-10, drew a 25.1 rating, which bowl organizers said was a record for any college football game and, in the bigger picture, brought a national spotlight to the college football scene in Arizona.

"It put college football a little more on the map in the state," says Andy Bagnato, a former college football sportswriter who later would become chief of communications for the Fiesta Bowl. "It resonated nationally. ASU, for a lot of reasons, didn't resonate nationally. People on the East Coast didn't see their games. But everybody watched Penn State and Miami, and all of a sudden people took note of the Fiesta Bowl. I think it really contributed a lot to football in the state."

Twelve years later, in 1999, the Fiesta Bowl hosted the first BCS National Championship Game – Tennessee beat Florida State, 23-16, in front of 80,470 fans and an audience of more than 26 million watching on TV – and college football was cemented as a big deal in Arizona.

"I think the Fiesta Bowl definitely deserves credit for kind of opening the gates, if you will, to Arizona from a national perspective," Bagnato says.

There's no bigger game – or event – in football than the Super Bowl, of course, and Arizona's place in the Super Bowl rotation gives the state bragging rights, exposure, and a financial boon. Super Bowl XLIX in 2015 generated a gross economic impact of $719.4 million to the state, according to local officials.

Arizona also has had the good fortune of playing host to some of the most memorable moments in Super Bowl history, from the Giants' upset of the undefeated Patriots in Super Bowl XLII to Malcolm Butler's goal-line interception preserving the Patriots' win over the Seahawks in Super Bowl XLIX.

It was seven years after the Cardinals' arrival that the first Arizona Super Bowl followed suit. However, Super Bowl XXX in Sun Devil Stadium – when the Cowboys beat the Steelers for their third title in four seasons – was a one-off, the NFL rewarding current Cardinals owner Michael Bidwill's father, Bill.

The league never was going to play another Super Bowl in the antiquated college facility. A new stadium was needed, and it was Michael who spearheaded the effort, resulting in the November 2000 proposition vote that passed, 52 percent to 48 percent.

Six years later, State Farm Stadium debuted, and this year's game will mark the third Super Bowl in the building. The Fiesta Bowl and high school state championship games also are played there, making it a symbol of the sport's growth in Arizona.

"Football has definitely grown from the professional level all the way down to high school," Hall says. "It's just a big deal now."

Scott Bordow *covered Phoenix-area sports for 38 years as a sportswriter and columnist. He wrote for the* East Valley Tribune, *the* Arizona Republic, *and* The Athletic.

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NFL PLAY:60

FOR 15+ YEARS (SINCE 2007), THE NFL PLAY 60 INITIATIVE has served as the league's national youth health and wellness initiative to encourage millions of kids across the country to get physically active for at least 60 minutes a day and fuel the body with nutritious foods. With more than $360 million committed to youth health and fitness through PLAY 60 programming, grants, and awareness campaigns, the NFL, its 32 clubs, and its PLAY 60 partners have provided more than 38 million children the resources they need to boost their activity levels by supporting programs in over 73,000 schools and constructing more than 280 youth fitness zones nationwide.

The NFL and its PLAY 60 partners – which include Discovery Education, Special Olympics, GENYOUth, the Cooper Institute, and the Fuel Up to Play 60 program – have teamed up through the years to provide parents, teachers, and students with free digital and physical resources to stay active and healthy.

Fuel Up to Play 60, the leading in-school health and wellness program launched by the NFL and America's dairy farmers, has empowered students and educators to work together to build healthier schools and students for more than 10 years. The program has digital resources that include the Fuel Up to Play 60 Homeroom, with an assortment of fun videos featuring NFL players and learning activities on health and wellness and building strong communities. Learn more at **FuelUpToPlay60.com.**

The **American Heart Association** and the NFL have provided free digital programming that delivers physical activity-themed content to students in the classroom and at home. The American Heart Association and the NFL have provided PLAY 60-inspired video content, classroom curriculum, family challenges, and an interactive PLAY 60 app that encourages kids to stay active for 60 minutes a day. Rooted in American Heart Association science, PLAY 60 digital content prioritizes physical and mental wellness to help children create healthy routines and habits for the whole family. To access the digital materials, visit **Heart.org/NFLPLAY60**.

Special Olympics and the NFL continue to team up to provide athletes with intellectual disabilities opportunities to PLAY 60, with a focus on Unified Flag Football. Special Olympics Unified Flag Football creates opportunities for individuals with and without intellectual disabilities to play on the same team.

The NFL and its partners are continuing their commitment to the PLAY 60 movement for an active and healthier generation for years to come. To learn more, visit **NFL.com/PLAY60.**

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NFL Foundation Invests In Us

THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE FOUNDATION is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the lives of those touched by the game of football. The NFL Foundation – in conjunction with the NFL's 32 clubs – supports the health, safety, and wellness of athletes across all levels, including youth and Flag football and the communities that support the game.

The NFL Foundation manages nearly 50 grant and recognition programs in support of its mission. In 2022, the Foundation continued its ongoing support across a broad spectrum of impact, including youth and high school football support grants, youth health and wellness, social justice grants, national partnership support focused on player health and safety, and efforts to support players' philanthropic causes and charities. The NFL Foundation is central to the league's ongoing efforts to make a positive impact in communities across the country.

The NFL Foundation also funds and supports evidence-based youth character, mental wellness, social and emotional learning (SEL) initiatives, social justice programming at the grassroots and national level, and year-round support of the league's on-field cause campaigns: Crucial Catch, Salute to Service, and Inspire Change. The Foundation also continues to play a key role in recovery and relief efforts following major disasters around the country, providing financial resources and in-kind media to support fundraising for national nonprofits, including the CDC Foundation, United Way, and American Red Cross. The NFL Foundation also provided more than $150,000, raised through the league's charitable Auction platform (NFL.com/auction), to support Red Cross relief efforts following Hurricane Ian.

The ability to access computers and the internet has become increasingly important. Unfortunately, there is a growing gap between the underprivileged members of society, especially the poor, rural, elderly, and persons with disabilities, who do not have access to computers or the internet. The NFL Foundation, in partnership with all 32 clubs, provides financial support, education, equipment, and infrastructure through a new grant program aimed at reducing the digital divide in our clubs' local communities.

For more information on NFL Foundation programs and their impact, visit **NFLfoundation.org.**

SUPER BOWL LEGACY GRANT: AIDING ARIZONA'S COMMUNITIES IN NEED

Each year, the NFL, via the NFL Foundation, seeks to improve the Super Bowl host community through its Super Bowl Legacy Grant initiative by awarding a $1 million grant matched by the Super Bowl Host Committee and allocated to local nonprofit organizations.

This year, the NFL Foundation partnered with the Arizona Community Foundation and the Arizona Super Bowl Host Committee to help support and promote the Super Bowl Legacy Grant program and the everlasting impression Super Bowl LVII will have in Arizona.

The **Super Bowl LVII Legacy Grant Program**, funded by the NFL Foundation and the Arizona Super Bowl Host Committee's partners, will provide more than $2 million in grants to local nonprofits with proven track records of benefiting underserved Arizonans. Selected nonprofits focus their work within the following pillars:

- Education: improving access to quality education for youth;
- Health & Wellness: improving the overall well-being of residents, primarily focusing on youth;
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Social Justice: driving positive action for equality and accessibility; and
- Environment & Sustainability: implementing food recovery and recycling initiatives.

For more information, visit **azsuperbowl.com/legacy.**

Engaging Our Communities

THE NFL EMBRACES ITS ROLE in unifying communities and serving as a force for positive change. The league and its teams are committed to implementing consistent and thoughtful responses to societal issues by educating the NFL family, instituting transparent policies, and actively engaging with communities to positively impact society.

The NFL Inspire Change platform includes an ongoing acknowledgment of the ways that systemic racism contributes to barriers to opportunity and equality. Its work, in conjunction with teams, players, and the Players Coalition, encompasses programs and initiatives in four key areas: Education; Economic Advancement; Community-Police Relations; and the Criminal Justice System.

New in 2022, the league worked with teams to celebrate **Inspire Change Changemakers**. During the season, each club selected a "changemaker," an individual (or group of individuals) making a difference in their community with their social justice work, either individually or as part of a non-profit organization. Each Changemaker received a $10,000 donation from the NFL Foundation, paid to the social justice non-profit of their choice.

The NFL is proud to support the ongoing efforts by its social justice grant partners, addressing everything from bail reform to mentorship for underserved communities. Learn more about its grant partners and ongoing social justice work by visiting **NFL.com/inspirechange.**

In addition, the league focuses its efforts on social issues that include character education as well as domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking prevention.

All NFL and team employees and personnel – more than 6,000 in total – participated in year eight of social responsibility education during the 2022 season. Additionally, the NFL continues its support for its partners at Raliance and the National Domestic Violence Hotline.

For more information about the NFL's work on social issues, visit **NFL.com/community.**

INSPIRE CHANGE

IT TAKES ALL OF US TO ADVANCE SOCIAL JUSTICE

The NFL's Inspire Change initiative focuses on reducing barriers to opportunity and creating progress in education, economic advancement, community and police relations, and criminal justice reform. With the introduction of the Inspire Change Changemaker Award this year, the NFL is recognizing community members who are working every day to advance social justice.

To learn more about each team's Changemaker and learn more about Inspire Change, visit **NFL.com/InspireChange**

Highlighting Latino Fan Engagement

POR LA CULTURA

THE NFL CONTINUES TO EXPAND ITS PLATFORM of customized offerings for the growing fan base of more than 31 million U.S. Latinos. This diverse programming boasts dedicated content channels that reflect the diversity of Latino fans, including: bilingual/bicultural US-based **@ElSnapNFL** on Instagram; top-tier football-first content on Spanish-dominant destination sites of Mundo NFL (YouTube & Twitter) as well as **NFL.com/Mundo** player highlights, music, family and culture; and multi-platform media partnerships with Telemundo, NBC Universo, ESPN Deportes, FOX Deportes, Amazon Prime Video, Univision/Televisa, NGL Media/MiTú, and Entravision.

This season, the league introduced new partnerships, collaborations, and activations designed to celebrate "la cultura Latina." With a large and passionate Latino fanbase, as well as a number of Latino players, personnel, and Legends, the NFL and its clubs are committed to celebrating the diverse cultures within the Latino community. Launched in 2021, the league continued its season-long campaign "Por La Cultura" (For the Culture) by highlighting NFL players, coaches, and staff, celebrating Latino excellence, and telling authentic stories of the community. This season's heritage spot, titled "The Celebration," featured award-winning actor and recording artist Anthony Ramos and highlighted how football embraces culture, unifies people, and uplifts youth.

Additionally, the league launched a Latino music series in club markets as well as the first-ever "Por La Cultura" mixtape in partnership with production powerhouse NEON16, led by super producer Tainy. The NFL also continues its partnership with the Hispanic Heritage Foundation to inspire and propel youth toward achieving their dreams and building a unified path to greatness through sport.

For more information on these and other initiatives, visit **NFL.com/Porlacultura.** For NFL news, videos, articles, analysis, and more updates in Spanish, go to **NFL.com/Mundo.**

Elite Civil Construction of Phoenix was awarded one of this year's largest local Super Bowl contracts.

BUSINESS CONNECT: FORMULA FOR SUCCESS

Producing a world-class event like Super Bowl LVII takes a massive amount of time, effort, and local support. In Arizona, local diverse business owners started preparing to work the 10 days of events leading up to Super Bowl Sunday more than 15 months ago.

For these suppliers, being selected for the Super Bowl LVII Business Connect program was step one.

Gilbert Tapia runs one of the more than 200 minority, women, LGBTQ+, and veteran-owned companies handpicked by the Business Connect team to compete for Super Bowl contracts. He was chosen for his business experience and the Arizona flair his company brings, as were the other suppliers who offer services such as security, transportation, furniture for VIP parties, food for special celebrity guests and fans, staging, lighting, and entertainment acts for private and public events.

"I've been in business for five years, and I've never had an experience like working with NFL Business Connect," said Tapia, whose company, Cookie Brokers, has been hired to provide cookies at several Super Bowl-related events. "I've never worked with people who are such advocates for suppliers. I've had an amazing experience."

In addition to opening up contract opportunities, Business Connect works to build a stronger, more competitive local business community by hosting a series of workshops and networking events. These programs prepare member companies to compete for high-level contracts while building their business acumen. The workshops cover everything from how to dissect an NFL RFP (Request for Proposal) to digital marketing and branding.

"[Business Connect] creates a level playing field that allows local companies to contribute their skills and one-of-a-kind traits to the event and gives smaller companies the tools to succeed in the current market," said Olga Araiza from Elite Civil Construction, whose firm was hired to retrofit State Farm Stadium to meet Super Bowl needs.

Business Connect suppliers are proud to have played a role in bringing Super Bowl LVII to a local and global audience.

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MEET THE NFL'S GREEN TEAM

NFL GREEN

The Super Bowl has been recognized as America's greenest professional sports championship – and with good reason. The NFL has been addressing the game's environmental impact since 1993 and expanding its efforts ever since. Numerous environmental initiatives are in place for Super Bowl LVII.

A dozen community greening projects have been implemented throughout the state of Arizona in partnership with the Arizona Super Bowl Host Committee, the Arizona Cardinals, Verizon, and APS. They include habitat restoration, urban tree plantings to provide shade and cooling, creation of community vegetable gardens and pollinator gardens in under-resourced neighborhoods, and habitat restoration.

For its largest community volunteer environmental project to date, NFL Green partnered with the Arizona Super Bowl Host Committee, OdySea Aquarium, the Phoenix Zoo, Natural Restorations, the U.S. Forest Service, and retired military special ops veterans from FORCE BLUE to revitalize the lower Salt River. Hundreds of community volunteers joined in the effort to remove trash from the riverbed and riverbanks. FORCE BLUE divers also removed invasive species from this important waterway.

As part of a special Veterans Day initiative, the NFL teamed up with FORCE BLUE to educate and inspire the next generation of conservation leaders. In partnership with OdySea Aquarium, NAUI Worldwide, PepsiCo, and the NFL Players Association, children from Gold Star families attended an Ocean Conservation School (OCS) and received SCUBA training with veterans from FORCE BLUE. The goal is to create a cadre of future conservation leaders and to give children who have lost a parent in military service a tangible way to honor their legacy.

A documentary about the NFL's work with FORCE BLUE to restore a coral reef off Florida's coast is being shared with active and retired military at a Salute to Service event during Super Bowl Week. Short films about the OCS and Salt River restoration projects also are being shown. Military members have an opportunity to learn about FORCE BLUE's mission to retrain veterans and give them a new mission and sense of purpose as they work to heal the ocean.

Super Kids – Super Sharing, co-sponsored by the Arizona Super Bowl Host Committee, Arizona Cardinals, The Salvation Army, Valley of the Sun YMCA, and Verizon, collected books, sports equipment, games, and school supplies to benefit thousands of local children in traditionally under-resourced areas.

Extra food from Super Bowl Week events is being collected and donated in partnership with Waste Not, United Food Bank, and St. Mary's Food Bank.

Reusable materials, including décor, carpet, signs, lumber, and other items, are being collected after Super Bowl events and donated locally for reuse and repurposing with support from The Salvation Army.

Recycling and composting at Super Bowl Experience at the Phoenix Convention Center and Hance Park is taking place in partnership with the City of Phoenix.

Additionally, a fan engagement project called "Green and Win" is giving fans an opportunity to win a unique gift and have their photo posted to social media when they share tips about helping the environment. In partnership with Verizon, 5,700 trees, 100 for each Super Bowl, will be planted in honor of participating fans and their teams to reforest areas damaged by wildfires in the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests.

Renewable energy provided by APS is powering the Phoenix Convention Center, host site of the Super Bowl Experience fan event. Renewable energy certificates (RECs) are being used to offset energy usage at other major Super Bowl venues.

You can learn more about NFL Green initiatives at **NFL.com/causes/nfl-green**.

PLAYER HEALTH & SAFETY

THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE is committed to improving the diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of injuries; enhancing medical protocols; improving how the game is taught and played; and protecting players' overall health, safety, and well-being.

Strengthening Concussion and Player Head Safety Protocols: As the 2022 season progressed, so, too, did the NFL's policies on concussions and head injuries. In October, the league and the NFL Players Association jointly updated the concussion protocol to further improve the safety of players. Specifically, the term "ataxia" was added to the mandatory "no-go" symptoms. "Ataxia" is defined as abnormality of balance/stability, motor coordination or dysfunctional speech caused by a neurological issue. On gameday, unaffiliated neurotrauma consultants (UNCs) and certified athletic trainers (ATCs) – medical professionals who are the foremost experts in their field – work with team medical staffs to identify, diagnose, and treat concussions and deliver the best possible care for players. Injury video monitoring and review technology has also enhanced experts' ability to monitor for injuries on gameday.

Guardian Cap Requirement at Training Camps: The 2022 preseason was the first time players from all 32 NFL teams wore the Guardian Cap, a padded shell attached to players' helmets designed to absorb and reduce the severity of impacts. All offensive linemen, defensive linemen, tight ends, and linebackers were required to wear Guardian Cap in practices up until the second preseason game – and the results exceeded expectations. Position groups required to wear the Guardian Cap during the mandated period in the preseason saw a more than 50 percent reduction in concussions versus the previous three-year average.

Reducing Lower Extremity Injuries in the Preseason: A new approach to ramp-up and acclimation in Training Camp helped reduce injuries during the period with historically the greatest density of injuries. A 2022 mandate

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set parameters limiting how many minutes players could practice over the course of their first four days back, then again during the "re-ramp up" when players put pads on. In addition, all players were required to wear sensors, adding a layer of data collection and analysis to this period. The ramp-up mandate was paired with targeted, club-by-club discussions about data-based injury-reduction strategies – enabling league staff, club coaches, GMs, and medical staff to collaborate on other best practices and player-load monitoring strategies. The results were significant. There was a 26 percent year-over-year decrease in lower extremity injuries during the first two weeks of training camp, and a 16 percent decrease for the preseason as a whole.

Driving Helmet Innovation: The league's continued work to drive innovation in helmet safety has led to more and safer helmet options from which players can choose. Each season, NFL players choose their own helmet from a list of helmets ranked by safety performance. Helmets are tested annually in a laboratory by the NFL and NFLPA's biomechanical experts. In 2022, five of the six new models tested ranked in the "top-performing" group. These increasingly better-performing helmets have contributed to a sustained 25 percent reduction in concussions in each of the last four seasons.

Advancing Innovative Medical Research: In early 2022, the NFL-NFLPA Joint Pain Management Committee and NFL Research and Innovation Committee awarded $1 million in research funding to two leading research institutions – the University of California San Diego and the University of Regina – to study the impact of CBD and cannabis on pain management. In 2023, the league plans to grant additional funding to better understand and improve potential alternative pain management treatments for NFL players.

NFL/AWS Artificial Intelligence Challenges: The NFL and Amazon Web Services (AWS) – as part of their "Digital Athlete" initiative, an injury-prevention and prediction tool – are currently holding an innovation challenge focused on designing new ways to measure and analyze the timing, duration, and frequency of player contact during NFL games using artificial intelligence. This will improve the NFL's ability to quantify contact on the field and ultimately enable the league to better predict – and prevent – player injuries. Winners of $100,000 in prizes will be announced in March 2023.

Using Mouthguard Sensors to Reduce Head Impacts: This season, the NFL expanded its partnership with top Division I universities to outfit athletes with mouthguard sensors to collect data from on-field head impacts. The sensor data is used to inform injury-reduction efforts at the pro and collegiate levels. Four new universities joined the program, substantially increasing the amount of data collected, which will lead to an even higher-quality analysis. The data collected will supplement identical data collection underway at four NFL clubs and ultimately help inform injury reduction strategies, rules changes, and the development of higher-performing equipment like position-specific helmets.

Diversity in Sports Medicine Pipeline Initiative: As part of the NFL's overall commitment to ensuring staff and leaders in the league office and at NFL clubs reflect the racial and gender makeup of America, leaders in NFL Player Health and Safety are working to help diversify the pipeline of people interested in pursuing careers in sports medicine. This season, the NFL, in partnership with the National Football League Physicians Society (NFLPS) and Professional Football Athletic Trainers Society (PFATS), launched the Diversity in Sports Medicine Pipeline Initiative, encouraging medical students from diverse backgrounds to consider careers in sports medicine through the unique opportunity to complete a rotation in an NFL club setting. The inaugural class saw 14 medical students from the nation's four Historically Black College and University (HBCU) medical schools complete rotations embedded with the medical staffs of eight NFL clubs. In 2023, the program aims to expand to additional medical schools and NFL clubs.

Stay on top of the latest news and innovations in the NFL's player health and safety efforts by visiting **NFL.com/PlayerHealthAndSafety.**

NFL TOTAL WELLNESS

This program encompasses a peer-to-peer holistic approach to the care of players and serves as a resource for wellness-related education, crisis management, clinical referrals, and consultation for all members of the NFL community.

Total Wellness works closely with the NFLPA and all 32 Team Behavioral Health Clinicians to ensure optimal integration of mental health resources at each club through the joint Behavioral Health Program.

NFL Total Wellness also provides guidance to expand and enhance clinical services offered through the Cigna Work/Life Resources EAP and the NFL Life Line – a free, confidential, and independently managed resource that connects members of the NFL family with trained counselors available for in-the-moment problem solving 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

Additional mental wellness resources are available to players through the NFL Player Care Foundation and the Professional Athletes Foundation, as well as the Trust, powered by the NFLPA.

Growing the Game

IN SUPPORT OF THE NFL'S VISION to grow the game of football and engage youth, high school, and college football participants, the "Play Football" initiative was launched in 2016. This year-round program celebrates youth, high school, and college football by connecting the football community and promoting the values of the game.

During the 2022 NFL season, Play Football prioritized its focus on utilizing the league calendar to lead efforts with youth, high school, and college stakeholders to grow and develop the game of football while ensuring alignment with all 32 clubs, current and former players (Legends), and other partners.

In collaboration with the Las Vegas Raiders and Arizona Cardinals communities, there were 12 collective Play Football events for the Pro Bowl and Super Bowl LVII that involved young fans, players, parents, and coaches. In total, over 7,000 stakeholders were engaged.

The reimagined Pro Bowl Games format spotlighted Flag football with the league's All-Stars playing a Flag game for the main event during the week. The NFL and all 32 clubs are working together to create excitement around the sport and get girls Flag as a sanctioned high school varsity sport.

In the league's continued efforts to increase participation and fandom internationally, NFL Football Development hosted three coaches' clinics and one youth clinic in Germany, Mexico, and London, impacting 300+ participants.

Top: The Mexico Cetys Flag football team captured the 17U Arizona Cardinals NFL FLAG Regional. Above: The AYF 8th Grade All-Star Game was played in Las Vegas.

Learn more about the Play Football initiative by visiting **playfootball.com** and join the conversation on social media using **#PLAYFOOTBALL**.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE COACHES

DON SHULA HIGH SCHOOL COACH OF THE YEAR

The Don Shula NFL High School Coach of the Year Award honors high school football coaches who demonstrate the integrity, achievement, and leadership exemplified by the winningest coach in NFL history, the late Don Shula.

Last year's winner, Coach Bob Palko from Mt. Lebanon (Pa.) High School, was nominated by the Pittsburgh Steelers and recognized at the 2022 Pro Bowl game last February.

This year, the NFL is recognizing two winners. For the first time, a winner from both the AFC and NFC were chosen and announced prior to the 2023 Pro Bowl Games in Las Vegas.

Nike, a presenting partner, and the NFL Foundation are awarding $10,000 to the two Don Shula Award winners, while their associated high school football programs receive $15,000. The other 30 finalists each receive a $1,000 award.

The two winners are being recognized at *NFL Honors* and at other Super Bowl Week events leading up to Super Bowl LVII in Arizona.

madd
NO MORE VICTIMS

MADD AND THE NFL TEAM UP FOR THE MOST VALUABLE POSITION

MADD and the NFL urge fans to remember to always plan ahead for a safe ride. If you drink, don't drive.

Did you know that two out of three people will be impacted by drunk driving in their lifetime? Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) is zeroing in on a day when there are no more victims of impaired driving. Through education and awareness campaigns and new advancements in auto technology, the end of impaired driving is closer than ever.

In 2021, MADD, Anheuser-Busch, and Uber launched the Decide to Ride campaign, a first-of-its-kind coalition that supports MADD's mission to end drunk driving that is amplified through its long-standing partnership with the NFL. Together we have teamed up to promote safe decision-making when you plan ahead through the lifesaving message: "You Can't Drive Drunk, If You Don't Drive There. Decide To Ride."

Over the past 13 years, MADD and the NFL have also engaged players and team staff through meaningful discussions, training, and impactful stories to inspire safe choices that protect themselves and others from the consequences of driving impaired. In addition, MADD has been there to support players, staff, and their communities when their lives have been forever changed because of an impaired driving crash.

Combined, these educational and awareness programs help change dangerous behaviors that lead to deaths and injuries caused by impaired driving, still the leading killer on U.S. roads. Each year, more than 10,000 people die and 300,000 are injured due to drunk driving.

Consider this, every 45 minutes someone is killed by an impaired driver. That means that during the course of Super Bowl LVII, four people's lives will have been cut short. MADD remains focused on one number: ZERO. Together with the NFL and the fans, MADD is creating a nation of zero deaths, zero injuries, and zero families impacted by impaired driving.

We need your help; visit **madd.org** today to get involved or follow **@MADDNational**. Join the conversation on social media using **#DecideToRide.**

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Crucial Catch

THE NFL, ITS CLUBS, PLAYERS, and the American Cancer Society are committed to the fight against cancer. Crucial Catch addresses the early detection and risk reduction for multiple types of cancer and is committed to addressing the unequal burden of cancer in communities that need it most.

Since 2009, this partnership has raised more than $24 million in support of the American Cancer Society and its mission to save lives, celebrate lives, and lead the fight for a world without cancer. Money raised through the Crucial Catch initiative funds grants that help people in underserved communities receive potentially lifesaving screening resources.

With the NFL's support, the American Cancer Society's Community Health Advocates implementing Nationwide Grants for Empowerment and Equity (CHANGE) program has awarded grants to more than 100 health system partners to address cancer prevention, early detection, and timely access to follow-up care. Through NFL-funded grants, the partnership has directly impacted more than 1.3 million people through the promotion of screening and early detection.

Since its inception, Crucial Catch has placed an emphasis on getting screened and catching cancer early when it may be easier to treat. Starting in 2022, through funding provided by the NFL as part of the Crucial Catch initiative, fans and members of the NFL family are now able to easily find their nearest cancer screening center and additional screening resources at NFL.com/CrucialCatch or by texting "CATCH" to 635635. The site also provides resources for fans to determine the type of cancer screening they need, a cancer hotline, and a 24-hour chat for anyone who needs their screening questions answered.

Throughout October, NFL games featured multi-colored Crucial Catch branding on the field and in stadiums to represent multiple cancers – including breast, colorectal, lung, cervical, prostate, and childhood – all to provide education and raise awareness of how cancer has impacted the lives of people in our communities on many levels.

As part of the Crucial Catch initiative, the NFL and American Cancer Society continue to provide individuals nationwide with access to The Defender, a free digital assessment tool that helps fans better understand and reduce their cancer risk. The tool provides users with personalized, quick, and informative recommendations on how they can take action and adapt their lifestyles to reduce their risk of cancer.

To learn more about these efforts, **visit NFL.com/crucialcatch.**

PLAYER CARE FOUNDATION

CARING FOR THOSE WHO CONTRIBUTED

The NFL Player Care Foundation (PCF) is an independent foundation created in 2007 through a partnership among NFL owners, the NFL Players Association, the Pro Football Hall of Fame, and the NFL Alumni Association.

PCF is dedicated to helping former NFL players improve their quality of life by addressing a broad spectrum of needs, including financial assistance, medical support, career placement, cardiovascular health, prostate health, and mental health.

PCF is proud to partner with one of the nation's premier medical providers, Tulane University School of Medicine, to conduct its Healthy Body & Mind Screening program. This complimentary national program is available to all NFL Legends and includes cardiovascular, prostate, and mental health screenings.

Each year, a screening is held in the Super Bowl host city, including this year in Tempe. Also during Super Bowl Week, PCF is hosting its fifth annual Super Bowl Career Fair, an event where NFL Legends are able to network with recruiters from more than 50 employers.

Since its inception, PCF has provided over $21.6 million to former players in need through financial grants, disaster relief, and mental health resources.

Additionally, PCF has screened more than 6,300 retired players and has identified numerous life-threatening medical issues that were addressed immediately.

The Foundation provides these programs and services with diversity, equity, and inclusion as a guiding principle in its work.

To learn more about the NFL Player Care Foundation, visit **NFLplayercare.com** or email **Dana.Lihan@NFL.com.**

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2021 STS Award Winner Andrew Beck (second from right) and family

NFL SALUTE TO SERVICE AWARD PRESENTED BY USAA

The Salute to Service Award presented by USAA annually recognizes NFL players, coaches, personnel, and Legends nominated by NFL clubs who demonstrate an exemplary commitment to honoring and supporting the military community.

Nominees are evaluated based on the positive effect of the individual's efforts on the military community, the type of service conducted, the thoroughness of the program, and the level of commitment. New in 2022, NFL fans helped determine the Salute to Service Award finalists by voting for their favorite team nominee.

Team nominations were submitted in October, and the award is presented during Super Bowl Week and recognized at the *NFL Honors* awards show.

First presented in 2011, recent recipients include former Chargers linebacker Donnie Edwards (2019); CEO of AMB Sports and Entertainment, the parent company of the Atlanta Falcons, Steve Cannon (2020); and Denver Broncos tight end Andrew Beck (2021).

A total of $50,000 is donated in the recipient's name: $25,000 from USAA to the aid societies representing all military branches and $25,000 from the NFL to the award recipient's military charity of choice.

USAA, Official NFL Salute to Service Partner, honors and appreciates active duty military, veterans, and their families by creating unique opportunities that bring the military community and the NFL closer together. Examples include USAA's Salute to Service Games, where military guests are invited to watch their local NFL team play while enjoying VIP hospitality; and USAA's Unit Interactions, where NFL players visit local military installations to experience a day in the life of service members and share their appreciation of our nation's military.

To learn more about this year's Salute to Service Award nominees, visit **NFL.com/Salute.**

Saluting Our Military

SALUTE TO SERVICE IS THE NFL'S year-round effort to Honor, Empower, and Connect with our nation's service members, veterans, and their families. The league works with its core charitable partners, including the Pat Tillman Foundation (PTF), Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS), United Service Organizations (USO), the Bob Woodruff Foundation (BWF), and Wounded Warrior Project (WWP), to fund programs and provide resources that positively impact the military and veteran communities.

Since 2011, more than $58 million has been raised for our Salute to Service partners.

Honoring the Service and Sacrifice of Military Members and their Families

Throughout the year, the NFL, its clubs, and players honor and recognize service members, veterans, and their families at NFL events across the United States and around the world.

John Minchillo/AP Images

Honor in Action: In October, the NFL and its Salute to Service partner, TAPS, which provides care for the families of America's fallen military heroes, hosted an exclusive experience for military families in London. Six TAPS families, alongside military surviving families from the British Armed Forces, had the opportunity to attend a family welcome reception at Winfield House, the residence of the United States Ambassador to the United Kingdom. Additionally, the families viewed a private team practice hosted by the Jacksonville Jaguars and attended the Broncos-Jaguars game at Wembley Stadium. During this trip, families from the United States and the United Kingdom came together to connect, bond, and share. This was the fifth year of the NFL TAPS UK Experience.

Empowering the Military Community through Partnerships and Resources

By partnering with organizations that support service members, veterans, and their families, the NFL uses its platform and resources to create a positive impact for our nation's heroes.

Empower in Action: In October, wheelchair football athletes from across the nation competed in the third USA Wheelchair Football League (USAWFL) tournament of the 2022 season, with the Los Angeles Rams Wheelchair Football Team taking home the tournament title. The USAWFL is a program of BWF grant recipient Move United and is made possible through contributions by the NFL. Through the USAWFL, adults with disabilities, including wounded veterans, can take part in fast-paced and competitive football games. Since 2020, more than 700 athletes and coaches have participated in the league.

Connecting through the Shared Love of Football

The NFL brings service members and their families together through their shared love of football and provides opportunities for those serving to connect with one another and the communities in which they live.

Connect in Action: In October, the USO opened its northernmost center at the Thule Air Base in Greenland as part of the NFL's ongoing efforts to increase social connections within the military community. The center was built partially through funding from the NFL's Salute to Service grant program and will connect a military population of around 600 men and women from numerous military branches. Its amenities include comfortable furniture for resting, computers and Wi-Fi access, complimentary snacks and beverages, as well as a lounge area with TVs, gaming entertainment, movies, and more.

For more information on Salute to Service, please visit **NFL.com/Salute.**

EAGLES ARE EARLY RISERS

At 4-0, Philadelphia flies above the radar as NFL's final undefeated team

AIDED BY KEY OFF-SEASON ADDITIONS and the emergence of quarterback Jalen Hurts, the Eagles were soaring as the 2022 NFL campaign kicked into gear. Philadelphia was the league's only undefeated team through four weeks, while proving it could win in different ways – from high-scoring affairs to defensive gems to comeback triumphs.

The comeback came in Week 4, when the Eagles spotted Jacksonville a 14-0 lead before surging to a 29-21 victory. Linebacker Haason Reddick, signed as a free agent in the offseason, had two sacks and two fumble recoveries in the win, and cornerback James Bradberry, another free agent newcomer, grabbed a big third-quarter interception when the Jaguars were driving for a go-ahead score. On offense, Miles Sanders accounted for 134 of the team's 210 rushing yards and tallied two touchdowns.

"Not a bit of panic on the sidelines," Reddick said of the team's early deficit. "We knew we would get it right. Nobody is going to hang his head. Nobody is going to get down or lose his focus. We just went to work."

The season started with a wild 38-35 win at Detroit, with Hurts amassing 333 total yards

Eagles quarterback Jalen Hurts accounted for eight TDs (four passing, four rushing) during a 4-0 start that put Philadelphia atop the NFC East.

Daniel Kucin Jr./AP Images

NFL STANDINGS THROUGH WEEK 4

AFC EAST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Dolphins	3-1-0	.750	98	91
Bills	3-1-0	.750	114	58
Jets	2-2-0	.500	76	101
Patriots	1-3-0	.250	74	98

AFC NORTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Browns	2-2-0	.500	105	95
Ravens	2-2-0	.500	119	100
Bengals	2-2-0	.500	91	70
Steelers	1-3-0	.250	74	90

AFC SOUTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Jaguars	2-2-0	.500	105	67
Titans	2-2-0	.500	75	101
Colts	1-2-1	.375	57	85
Texans	0-3-1	.125	73	93

AFC WEST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Chiefs	3-1-0	.750	129	96
Chargers	2-2-0	.500	92	108
Broncos	2-2-0	.500	66	68
Raiders	1-3-0	.250	96	100

NFC EAST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Eagles	4-0-0	1.000	115	71
Cowboys	3-1-0	.750	71	62
Giants	3-1-0	.750	76	71
Commanders	1-3-0	.250	73	107

NFC NORTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Vikings	3-1-0	.750	86	80
Packers	3-1-0	.750	75	69
Bears	2-2-0	.500	64	77
Lions	1-3-0	.250	140	141

NFC SOUTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Buccaneers	2-2-0	.500	82	68
Falcons	2-2-0	.500	103	101
Panthers	1-3-0	.250	78	85
Saints	1-3-0	.250	76	96

NFC WEST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
49ers	2-2-0	.500	71	46
Rams	2-2-0	.500	70	94
Cardinals	2-2-0	.500	88	103
Seahawks	2-2-0	.500	95	115

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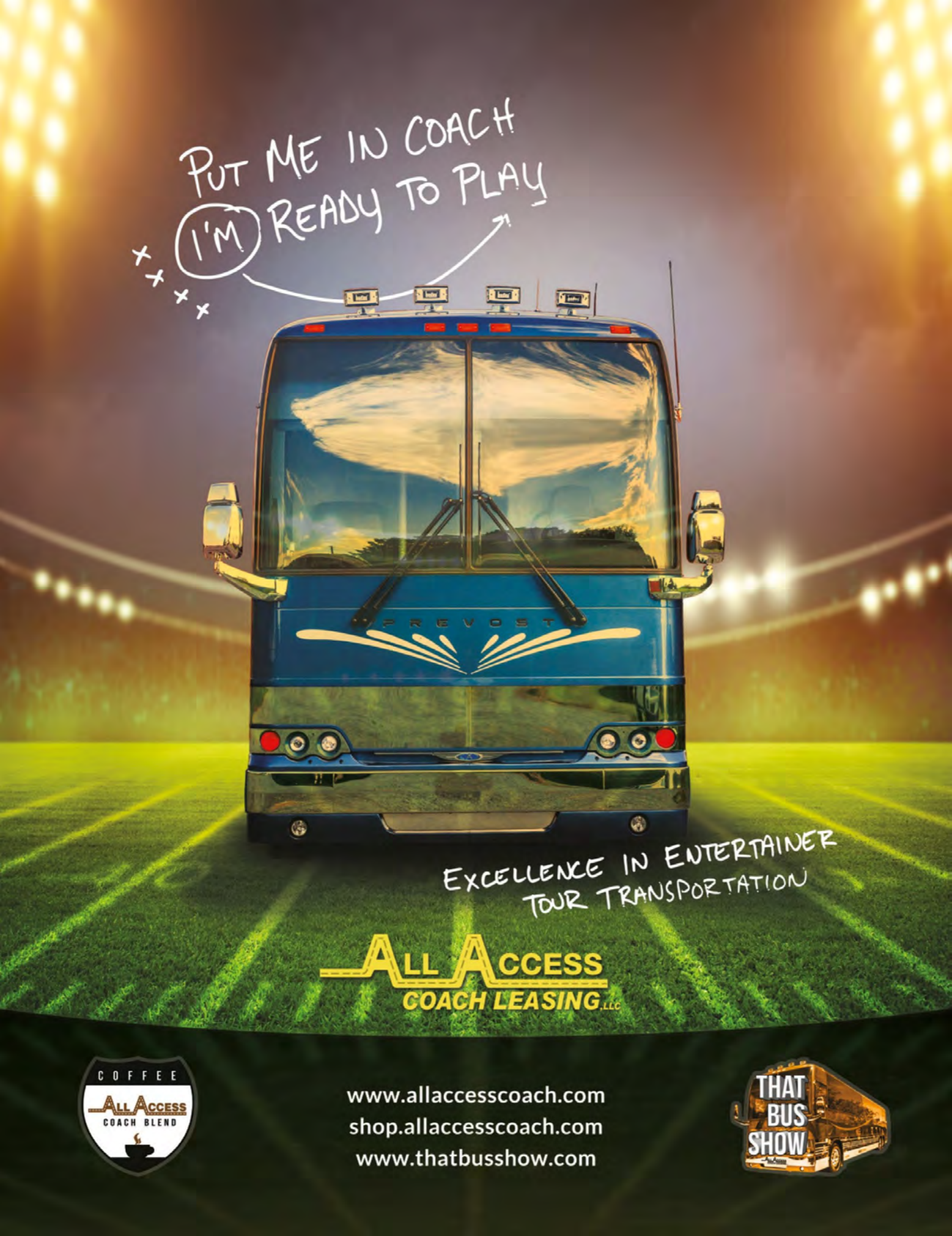
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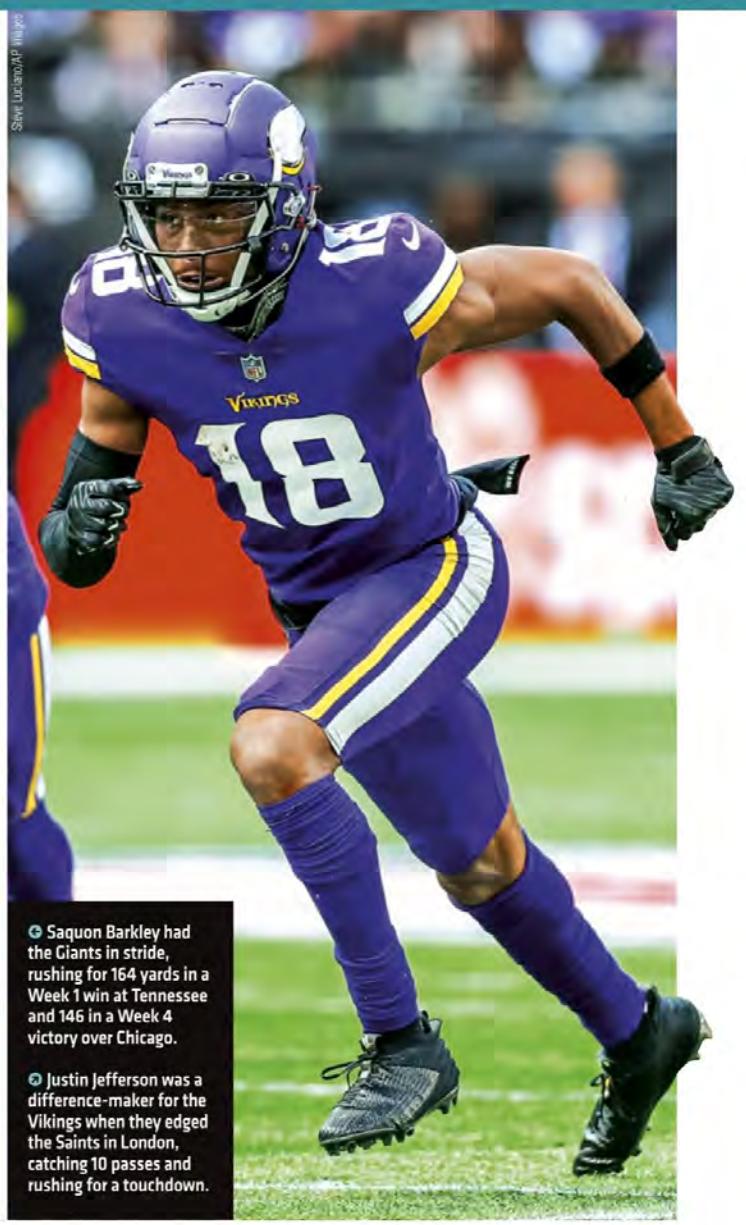

Steve Luciano/AP Images

Saquon Barkley had the Giants in stride, rushing for 164 yards in a Week 1 win at Tennessee and 146 in a Week 4 victory over Chicago.

Justin Jefferson was a difference-maker for the Vikings when they edged the Saints in London, catching 10 passes and rushing for a touchdown.

(243 passing, 90 rushing) and wide receiver A.J. Brown, acquired in a draft-day trade with the Titans, catching 10 passes for 155 yards.

Darius Slay intercepted two passes in the Eagles' 24-7 Week 2 win over Minnesota, and DeVonta Smith starred the following week at Washington, catching eight passes for 169 yards, including a 2-yard touchdown, as part of a 24-8 victory. The defense shined as well, keeping both the Vikings and Commanders off the scoreboard until the second half while racking up a combined 11 sacks.

A balanced attack allowed the Eagles to become the first NFL team since 1995 with at least 10 rushing touchdown in the season's first four games, and the seventh since 1970 to begin a season 4-0 and amass at least 400 total yards of offense in each game.

"I don't think I was ever 4-0. It feels good," said defensive tackle Fletcher Cox, who had sacks in three of those games. "The best thing about being 4-0 is that now we have to try and go 5-0. The biggest thing right now is to continue to build each and every week, hold each other accountable, and go out and play as a team."

WEEK 1

Tabbed by many as a title contender, the Bills opened the NFL's 103rd season by defeating the defending Super Bowl champion Rams, 31-10, at SoFi Stadium. Quarterback Josh Allen passed for 297 yards and three TDs and added a 4-yard touchdown run. "We're going to make the plane do backflips on the way home tonight," said Buffalo linebacker Von Miller, who had two sacks in his return to the site where he helped the Rams capture Super Bowl LVI. "You could look in our eyes and tell that everybody was hungry, and everybody wanted this game." With the contest tied, 10-10, in the third quarter, Allen led an 8-play march capped with his 7-yard TD pass to Isaiah McKenzie. The Bills then tacked on two more touchdowns while holding the Rams scoreless, ending L.A.'s streak of 89 consecutive halves with a point dating back to November 2019. Prior to the game, Rams owner Stan Kroenke, retired left tackle Andrew Whitworth, and former Rams receiver Odell Beckham Jr. took part in a ceremony honoring the franchise's Super Bowl XXXIV and LVI championships.

Michael Conroy/AP Images

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Getty Images

"THE NFL HASN'T SEEN ANYTHING LIKE (PATRICK) MAHOMES – I PROMISE YOU THAT. HE'S THE HOUDINI OF OUR ERA."

— CHIEFS TIGHT END TRAVIS KELCE, AFTER THE QB THREW A PAIR OF ACROBATIC TOUCHDOWN PASSES IN A WEEK 4 VICTORY OVER TAMPA BAY

Extra Points: Two momentum-swinging plays by Minkah Fitzpatrick – a 31-yard interception-return touchdown on Cincinnati's first possession and partially blocking a PAT attempt in the final minute of regulation – keyed the Steelers' 23-20 overtime victory over the Bengals. … Led by Patrick Mahomes (360 passing yards, 5 TDs) and Travis Kelce (8 receptions, 121 yards, 1 TD), Kansas City upended Arizona, 44-21, to win its eighth consecutive Kickoff Weekend game. … Myles Garrett registered two sacks and forced a fumble, and Cade York connected on a 58-yard field goal in the final seconds, lifting the Browns to a 26-24 victory over Carolina. … Justin Jefferson caught two TD passes as part of his 184-yard receiving day in the Vikings' 23-7 win over Green Bay. … Seattle's Geno Smith completed 17 of 18 first-half passes, including scoring strikes to Colby Parkinson and Will Dissly, in a 17-16 victory over the Broncos. … The Giants were among four teams that rallied from double-digit deficits to win or tie on the weekend, with Daniel Jones' 1-yard TD pass to Chris Myarick and 2-point conversion toss to Saquon Barkley proving the difference in a 21-20 triumph at Tennessee.

WEEK 2

Another weekend of improbable comebacks saw the Dolphins post the most unlikely of all as they bounced back from a 21-point fourth-quarter deficit to stun the Ravens, 42-38. QB Tua Tagovailoa led the way by throwing six touchdown passes, four of those in the final 12 minutes, 12 seconds. Trailing 35-14, Miami crept closer on River Cracraft's 2-yard TD reception. Scoring strikes of 48 and 60 yards to Tyreek Hill followed, and after Justin Tucker's 51-yard field goal put the Ravens back in front, Tagovailoa drove the Dolphins 68 yards in six plays, the last of those a 7-yard laser to Jaylen Waddle in the end zone with 14 seconds remaining. "This just shows the resiliency of our team," said Tagovailoa. "You look at the big picture of it, the confidence goes up." While Hill and Waddle became the first teammates in league history to total at least 10 receptions, 150 receiving yards, and two touchdown receptions in the same game, not all the superlatives belonged to the Dolphins. Baltimore's Lamar Jackson became the first NFL player with both a TD run and a TD pass of at least 75 yards in the same game, with his 79-yard scoring run giving the Ravens their 21-point lead.

- In 2022, the Chiefs' Andy Reid became the first NFL coach to lead two different teams (Philly, KC) for 10-or-more seasons.
- Lamar Jackson dazzled in the Ravens' Week 3 win over the Patriots, throwing for four TDs and rushing for 107 yards.
- The Rams raised banners honoring their two Super Bowl championship teams.

Extra Points: Big rallies were also turned in by the Jets, who became the first team in 21 years to overcome a 13-point deficit in the final two minutes of a game, and the Cardinals, who trailed 20-0 at halftime before prevailing in overtime. Garrett Wilson's 15-yard TD reception and Greg Zuerlein's PAT lifted New York to its 31-30 victory at Cleveland, while Arizona tied Las Vegas with a touchdown and 2-point conversion at the end of regulation and walked off a 29-23 winner when Byron Murphy Jr. brought back a fumble 59 yards for a TD.

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Safety Jordon Poyer collected interceptions in each of the Bills' first three victories.

Daniel Kucin Jr./AP Images

… Amon-Ra St. Brown caught nine passes for 116 yards and two touchdowns and added 68 rushing yards, while Aidan Hutchinson chipped in with three sacks, pacing the Lions' 36-27 victory over the Commanders. … Cooper Kupp's two scoring receptions helped the Rams edge Atlanta, 31-27. … Micah Parsons recorded two sacks and Brett Maher kicked a 50-yard field goal as time expired, securing the Cowboys' 20-17 win over Cincinnati. … Jaylen Watson's 99-yard interception return for a touchdown snapped a fourth-quarter tie and propelled the Chiefs to a 27-24 victory over the Chargers. … Stefon Diggs caught three TD passes and Matt Milano returned an interception 43 yards for another score in Buffalo's 41-7 triumph over the Titans.

WEEK 3

Jacksonville continued to make an early impression, posting its largest margin of victory on the road in 21 years with a 38-10 win over the Chargers. "I think the way we played you can't deny that we're a really good team. But at the end of the day, it doesn't really matter what it says about us. We know who we are," said QB Trevor Lawrence, who threw for 262 yards and three touchdowns. A week after blanking the Colts at home, the Jaguars' offense flexed its muscle. James Robinson's 50-yard TD run on fourth-and-1 in the third quarter gave Jacksonville a 23-10 lead, and after its defense forced a three-and-out, Lawrence led a 14-play march that ended with his 4-yard TD pass to Christian Kirk. Riley Patterson kicked three field goals for the Jaguars, who topped the 30-point mark for the first time in more than two years, while on the other side of the ball, they surrendered only 26 rushing yards. "Our number one thing is to stop the run. That's what we did today. When we stop the run, we can have fun," said defensive lineman Dawuane Smoot, who collected a sack and forced a fumble.

With the Cowboys' 25-10 victory over Washington, Cooper Rush became the first quarterback in NFL history to win each of his first four career starts and post a passer rating of 90-or-higher in each game.

Extra Points: Lamar Jackson threw for four touchdowns and ran for another, and Justin Tucker recorded his 50th career field goal of at least 50 yards, lifting the Ravens to a 37-26 victory at New England. … K.J. Osborn's 28-yard touchdown catch in the final minute of regulation gave the Vikings a 28-24 comeback victory over Detroit. … Matt Ryan's 12-yard TD pass to Jelani Woods and Rodney McLeod Jr.'s interception with two seconds to play secured the Colts' 20-17 win over the Chiefs. … Cordarrelle Patterson rushed for 141 yards and a TD in the Falcons' 27-23 win at Seattle. … A Roquan Smith interception set up Cairo Santos' 30-yard field goal as time expired to lift the Bears over the Texans, 23-20. … Ezekiel Elliott and CeeDee Lamb scored touchdowns and Brett Maher kicked three

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Deebo Samuel's electrifying 57-yard catch-and-run TD propelled the 49ers past the Rams in Week 4.

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field goals to carry the Cowboys past the Giants, 23-16. … Melvin Gordon scored the go-ahead TD on a 1-yard run and safety Kareem Jackson followed with a fumble recovery with 1:05 remaining to clinch the Broncos' 11-10 win over the 49ers.

WEEK 4

Squaring off in the same stadium where they met in Super Bowl LV, the Chiefs got the better of the Buccaneers this time around, 41-31. Kansas City QB Patrick Mahomes threw touchdown passes to Travis Kelce, Clyde Edwards-Helaire, and Jody Fortson as part of a night that saw him reach 20,000 career passing yards in just his 67th game, faster than anyone in NFL history. "When I came into the stadium, I realized that I hadn't been here and the bad taste I had last time came into effect," Mahomes said of the contest at Raymond James Stadium. The Chiefs jumped out quickly, recovering a fumble on the opening kickoff and scoring two plays later on Mahomes' 16-yard toss to Kelce. They tacked on three more touchdowns before halftime and finished the night with 417 total yards against a defense that had allowed only 27 points in its first three games. The game was played in the aftermath of Hurricane Ian, which devastated much of the Sunshine State. The Glazer family, owners of the Bucs, announced a $1 million donation for hurricane relief, a figure matched by the NFL Foundation.

Extra Points: The 100th international game in NFL history was a thriller, with the Vikings edging the Saints, 28-25 at London's Tottenham Hotspur Stadium. Kirk Cousins threw for 273 yards, Justin Jefferson had 10 receptions and rushed for a touchdown, and Greg Joseph kicked a tie-breaking 47-yard field goal with 24 seconds remaining for the victors. … Seattle's 48-45 win over the Lions became the second game in NFL history in which two teams combined for at least 90 points and 1,075 total yards of offense. … Austin Ekeler rushed for two touchdowns and caught another in the Chargers' 34-24 win at Houston. … Younghoe Koo kicked a go-ahead 45-yard field goal and Dee Alford had an interception in the final minute as Atlanta edged Cleveland, 23-20. … Derrick Henry rushed for 114 yards to help the Titans slip past the Colts, 24-17.

SCORES & AWARDS

WEEK 1 / SEPTEMBER 8-12

Bills 31, RAMS 10
Saints 27, FALCONS 26
Browns 26, PANTHERS 24
BEARS 19, 49ers 10
Steelers 23, BENGALS 20 (OT)
Eagles 38, LIONS 35
TEXANS 20, Colts 20 (OT)
DOLPHINS 20, Patriots 7
Ravens 24, JETS 9
COMMANDERS 28, Jaguars 22
Chiefs 44, CARDINALS 21
CHARGERS 24, Raiders 19
Giants 21, TITANS 20
VIKINGS 23, Packers 7
Buccaneers 19, COWBOYS 3
SEAHAWKS 17, Broncos 16

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK
AFC Offense
Patrick Mahomes, QB, Chiefs
AFC Defense
Minkah Fitzpatrick, S, Steelers
AFC Special Teams
Cade York, K, Browns
NFC Offense
Saquon Barkley, RB, Giants
NFC Defense
Uchenna Nwosu, LB, Seahawks
NFC Special Teams
Zech McPhearson, CB, Eagles
Pepsi Zero Sugar NFL Rookie
Jahan Dotson, WR, Commanders

WEEK 2 / SEPTEMBER 15-19

CHIEFS 27, Chargers 24
Dolphins 42, RAVENS 38
Jets 31, BROWNS 30
LIONS 36, Commanders 27
JAGUARS 24, Colts 0
Buccaneers 20, SAINTS 10
GIANTS 19, Panthers 16
Patriots 17, STEELERS 14
RAMS 31, Falcons 27
49ERS 27, Seahawks 7
COWBOYS 20, Bengals 17
BRONCOS 16, Texans 9
Cardinals 29, RAIDERS 23 (OT)
PACKERS 27, Bears 10
BILLS 41, Titans 7
EAGLES 24, Vikings 7

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK
AFC Offense
Tua Tagovailoa, QB, Dolphins
AFC Defense
Jaylen Watson, CB, Chiefs
AFC Special Teams
Braden Mann, P, Jets
NFC Offense
Amon-Ra St. Brown, WR, Lions
NFC Defense
Darius Slay, CB, Eagles
NFC Special Teams
Graham Gano, K, Giants
Pepsi Zero Sugar NFL Rookie
Garrett Wilson, WR, Jets

WEEK 3 / SEPTEMBER 22-26

BROWNS 29, Steelers 17
PANTHERS 22, Saints 14
BEARS 23, Texans 20
COLTS 20, Chiefs 17
DOLPHINS 21, Bills 19
VIKINGS 28, Lions 24
Ravens 37, PATRIOTS 26
Bengals 27, JETS 12
TITANS 24, Raiders 22
Eagles 24, COMMANDERS 8
Jaguars 38, CHARGERS 10
Rams 20, CARDINALS 12
Falcons 27, SEAHAWKS 23
Packers 14, BUCCANEERS 12
BRONCOS 11, 49ers 10
Cowboys 23, GIANTS 16

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK
AFC Offense
Trevor Lawrence, QB, Jaguars
AFC Defense
Trey Hendrickson, DE, Bengals
AFC Special Teams
Corliss Waitman, P, Broncos
NFC Offense
Cordarrelle Patterson, RB, Falcons
NFC Defense
Brandon Graham, DE, Eagles
NFC Special Teams
Pat O'Donnell, P, Packers
Pepsi Zero Sugar NFL Rookie
Romeo Doubs, WR, Packers

WEEK 4 / SEPTEMBER 29 - OCTOBER 3

BENGALS 27, Dolphins 15
Vikings 28, SAINTS 25+
FALCONS 23, Browns 20
Bills 23, RAVENS 20
COWBOYS 25, Commanders 10
Seahawks 48, LIONS 45
Chargers 34, TEXANS 24
Titans 24, COLTS 17
GIANTS 20, Bears 12
EAGLES 29, Jaguars 21
Jets 24, STEELERS 20
Cardinals 26, PANTHERS 16
PACKERS 27, Patriots 24 (OT)
RAIDERS 32, Broncos 23
Chiefs 41, BUCCANEERS 31
49ERS 24, Rams 9
+Played in London

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK
AFC Offense
Patrick Mahomes, QB, Chiefs
AFC Defense
Jordan Poyer, S, Bills
AFC Special Teams
Evan McPherson, K, Bengals
NFC Offense
Geno Smith, QB, Seahawks
NFC Defense
Haason Reddick, LB, Eagles
NFC Special Teams
Greg Joseph, K, Vikings
Pepsi Zero Sugar NFL Rookie
Breece Hall, RB, Jets

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VIKINGS STAKE THEIR CLAIM

Six-game winning streak puts Minnesota in control of NFC North race

AS THE 2022 NFL SEASON CROSSED the midway point, the Vikings could be seen deftly navigating a course toward their first playoff bid in three seasons and first NFC North crown since 2017. Their 7-1 mark was highlighted by four fourth-quarter comeback wins.

One of those rallies came in a 20-17 victory at Washington in Week 9 that snapped the Commanders' three-game winning streak.

"We continue to find ways to win football games, down 10 again in the fourth quarter and then capturing the momentum," Vikings head coach Kevin O'Connell said. "I'm proud of our team to get a win of that magnitude when we're down 10 and nobody flinches. We've got that mentality."

A Greg Joseph field goal pulled the Vikings within seven, and free safety Harrison Smith followed with an interception – his fourth of the season – to set up Dalvin Cook's game-tying 12-yard touchdown catch. After the Minnesota defense forced a three-and-out, QB Kirk Cousins orchestrated a 15-play drive that consumed six minutes and ended with Joseph's tiebreaking 28-yard field goal with 12 seconds left in regulation.

"We grind on and keep trying to pull [games] out in the end," Cousins said.

Free safety Harrison Smith had a big role in the Vikings' mid-season run, with interceptions in wins over Miami, Chicago, and Washington.

Tom DiPace/AP Images

NFL STANDINGS THROUGH WEEK 9

AFC EAST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Bills	6-2-0	.750	220	118
Jets	6-3-0	.667	196	176
Dolphins	6-3-0	.667	213	224
Patriots	5-4-0	.556	203	166

AFC NORTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Ravens	6-3-0	.667	235	196
Bengals	5-4-0	.556	228	185
Browns	3-5-0	.375	200	199
Steelers	2-6-0	.250	120	197

AFC SOUTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Titans	5-3-0	.625	149	158
Colts	3-5-1	.389	132	183
Jaguars	3-6-0	.333	199	178
Texans	1-6-1	.188	133	183

AFC WEST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Chiefs	6-2-0	.750	243	189
Chargers	5-3-0	.625	184	206
Broncos	3-5-0	.375	121	132
Raiders	2-6-0	.250	183	201

NFC EAST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Eagles	8-0-0	1.000	225	135
Cowboys	6-2-0	.750	183	133
Giants	6-2-0	.750	163	157
Commanders	4-5-0	.444	159	192

NFC NORTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Vikings	7-1-0	.875	193	161
Packers	3-6-0	.333	154	188
Bears	3-6-0	.333	187	216
Lions	2-6-0	.250	188	234

NFC SOUTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Buccaneers	4-5-0	.444	162	164
Falcons	4-5-0	.444	217	225
Saints	3-6-0	.333	212	227
Panthers	2-7-0	.222	179	228

NFC WEST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Seahawks	6-3-0	.667	241	220
49ers	4-4-0	.500	176	147
Rams	3-5-0	.375	131	173
Cardinals	3-6-0	.333	203	241

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- Micah Parsons had multiple sacks in four of the Cowboys' first eight games.
- Joe Mixon was a force in the Bengals' Week 8 win over Carolina, rushing for 153 yards and four touchdowns and also catching a TD pass.
- The Patriots' Week 8 win over the Jets was the 325th of Bill Belichick's coaching career, moving the six-time Super Bowl champion past George Halas and into second place on the all-time list.

Week 5's win over the Bears was another example of the team's grit. Cousins set a franchise record with 17 consecutive completions to start the game, then scored on a QB sneak with 2:26 remaining to give the Vikings a 29-22 win. Cook rushed for a pair of touchdowns and cornerback Cameron Dantzler forced a fumble that sealed the outcome.

A week later, Cook was back home in his native South Florida and recorded a 53-yard fourth-quarter touchdown run to secure a 24-16 victory over Miami. The Vikings were idle in Week 7 before returning to action and clipping the Cardinals, 34-26. Cousins completed 24 of 36 passes, including the 3,000th of his career, with two touchdown throws and a rushing TD. Linebacker Za'Darius Smith contributed three sacks in the win.

The impressive run gave Minnesota a leg up in the NFC North, with home victories over all three division rivals while building a 3.5-game lead over the Bears and the Packers.

WEEK 5

The Giants improved to 4-1 – and matched their 2021 win total – by battling back from a 17-point second-half deficit to stun the Packers, 27-22, at London's Tottenham Hotspur Stadium. "We were aware that we were underdogs in the game. You realize that, but I think we're a motivated group," said QB Daniel Jones. "We're motivated to play for each other." Saquon Barkley gave the Giants a late lead when he took a direct snap and ran for a 2-yard touchdown, but defensive heroics were needed to secure the result. Safety Xavier McKinney knocked down a fourth-and-1 pass at the 6-yard line to stop one Packers threat, and after the Giants took an intentional safety, linebacker Oshane Ximines sacked quarterback Aaron Rodgers on the game's final play. The Giants improved to 3-0 in London, with their wins coming in three different stadiums – having defeated the Dolphins at Wembley Stadium in 2007 and the Rams at Twickenham Stadium in 2016.

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Derrick Henry put together five straight 100-yard rushing efforts for the Titans, including 219 in a win vs. Houston, and had seven TDs in that span.

Jets cornerback Sauce Gardner came up clutch in a Week 9 victory over Buffalo, with seven tackles and his third interception of the season.

"I KNOW A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE GOING TO BE SURPRISED, RIGHT? BUT I DON'T THINK THERE'S A PERSON SURPRISED IN [OUR] LOCKER ROOM."

— JETS COACH ROBERT SALEH, AFTER HIS TEAM DEFEATED THE AFC EAST-LEADING BILLS IN WEEK 9

Extra Points: Austin Ekeler totaled 199 scrimmage yards (173 rushing, 26 receiving) and scored twice to help the Chargers rebound from a 14-point deficit and edge Cleveland, 30-28. … Taysom Hill starred in the Saints' 39-32 win over Seattle, rushing for 112 yards and three TDs and also throwing a touchdown pass. … Dallas' Dorance Armstrong Jr. forced a fumble on the third play from scrimmage that teammate DeMarcus Lawrence returned 19 yards for a touchdown, setting the tone for the Cowboys' 22-10 triumph over the Rams. … Breece Hall amassed 197 scrimmage yards (100 receiving, 97 rushing) and rushed for a TD as part of the Jets' 40-17 win over Miami. … Kyle Dugger brought back a fumble 59 yards for a touchdown and Rhamondre Stevenson rushed for 161 yards, keying the Patriots' 29-0 blanking of Detroit. … Patrick Mahomes connected with Travis Kelce for four touchdown passes in the Chiefs' 30-29 victory over Raiders.

WEEK 6

In one of the season's most anticipated showdowns, the Bills upended the team that knocked them out of the playoffs the previous two years by winning at Kansas City, 24-20. Buffalo QB Josh Allen threw for 329 yards and three touchdowns, highlighted by his go-ahead toss to Dawson Knox with 1:04 left in regulation. Stefon Diggs had 10 catches for 148 yards and a touchdown for the victors, and Gabe Davis added a 34-yard TD reception just before halftime. The Chiefs had a final chance after Knox's touchdown grab, but Bills cornerback Taron Johnson stepped in front of a pass intended for Skyy Moore for a game-sealing interception. "We were playing zone and [Johnson] read it perfectly," strong safety Jordan Poyer said of the decisive play. "I told him that was one of the greatest plays that I have seen on the field. The situation, the moment, that was just a hell of a play for this team." Poyer was a big story as well. Medically cleared to play – but not fly – after recovering from a rib injury, he drove the 973 miles from Buffalo so he could suit up for the game. He finished with four tackles.

Extra Points: Marcus Mariota completed 13 of 14 passes and accounted for three TDs – two passing, one rushing – as part of Atlanta's 28-14 victory over the 49ers. … Tariq Woolen intercepted a pass for the fourth consecutive week and added a fumble recovery to spark the Seahawks' 19-9 win over Arizona. … Joe Burrow's 60-yard touchdown pass to Ja'Marr Chase with 1:57 remaining in regulation capped the Bengals' 30-26 come-from-behind victory over the Saints. … The Colts battled back from an 11-point deficit to top Jacksonville, 34-27, the decisive points coming on Matt Ryan's 32-yard touchdown pass to Alec Pierce with 17 seconds to play. … The Giants forced two late turnovers and Saquon Barkley rushed for the game-winning TD with 1:43 to go to lift the Giants past the Ravens, 24-20.

WEEK 7

With QB Joe Burrow getting things going early and often, the Bengals stormed past the Falcons, 35-17, for their fourth win in five games. The points started coming on Cincinnati's first possession when Burrow

Kyusung Gong/AP Images

Geno Smith had the Seahawks on the move, completing a league-high 73 percent of his passes through nine games.

Tyreek Hill was the centerpiece to the Dolphins' dynamic passing attack, with 76 catches during the team's 6-3 start.

Wilfredo Lee/AP Images

found Tyler Boyd deep down the middle for a 60-yard touchdown. "Any time you score on the first drive on a big play like that, you think it could be one of those days," said Burrow. "But it was really about the execution throughout the whole game." Joe Mixon scored on a short run and Ja'Marr Chase caught 32- and 41-yard TD passes as the Bengals stormed to a 28-17 halftime lead, while Burrow (34 of 42, 481 yards, 3 TDs) became the first player with five games of 400-or-more yards passing in his first three NFL seasons. "I hope you all listened to me as I got up here at 0-2 and said just be patient," Bengals coach Zac Taylor told the media after the game. "We know what type of team we have and the faith I have in these players and coaches."

Extra Points: Josh Jacobs had three touchdown runs, including the go-ahead 7-yard score early in the fourth quarter, and finished with 143 rushing yards in the Raiders' 38-20 win over Houston. … Mecole Hardman became the first wide receiver in the Super Bowl era with at least two rushing touchdowns and a receiving touchdown in the same game as part of the Chiefs' 44-23 victory at San Francisco. … The Cardinals scored three touchdowns in a span of 1:42 late in the second quarter – on Keaontay Ingram's 2-yard run and interception returns by Marco Wilson and Isaiah Simmons – to fuel a 42-34 victory over New Orleans. … Justin Fields threw for 179 yards, including a 25-yard touchdown to Khalil Herbert, and rushed for another 82 yards in the Bears' 33-14 win over New England.

WEEK 8

Playing in his second game since being traded to the 49ers, Christian McCaffrey delivered a rare trifecta to spark a 31-14 victory over the Rams. He became just the fourth NFL player since 1970 – and the first since LaDainian Tomlinson in 2005 – with a touchdown pass, a rushing touchdown, and a touchdown reception in the same game. McCaffrey put San Francisco on the scoreboard with a 34-yard TD pass to Brandon Aiyuk in the second quarter, caught a go-ahead 9-yard touchdown pass from Jimmy Garoppolo late in the third quarter, and recorded his final TD on a 1-yard run with 12:07 to play. "That's awesome," McCaffrey said of his achievement. "Obviously those things are really cool. The biggest thing is coming out with a win, and the thing I'm most happy about is just this whole team welcoming me in with open arms." The 49ers trailed, 14-7, before Robbie Gould's 29-yard field goal kickstarted a string of 24 unanswered points that propelled San Francisco to its eighth consecutive regular-season win over its NFC West rival. Aiding in that effort was a 49ers defense keyed by linebacker Fred Warner (12 tackles) that surrendered just 58 second-half yards.

In Week 9 against Miami, the Bears' Justin Fields set the modern-day NFL record for rushing yards by a quarterback in a game with 178.

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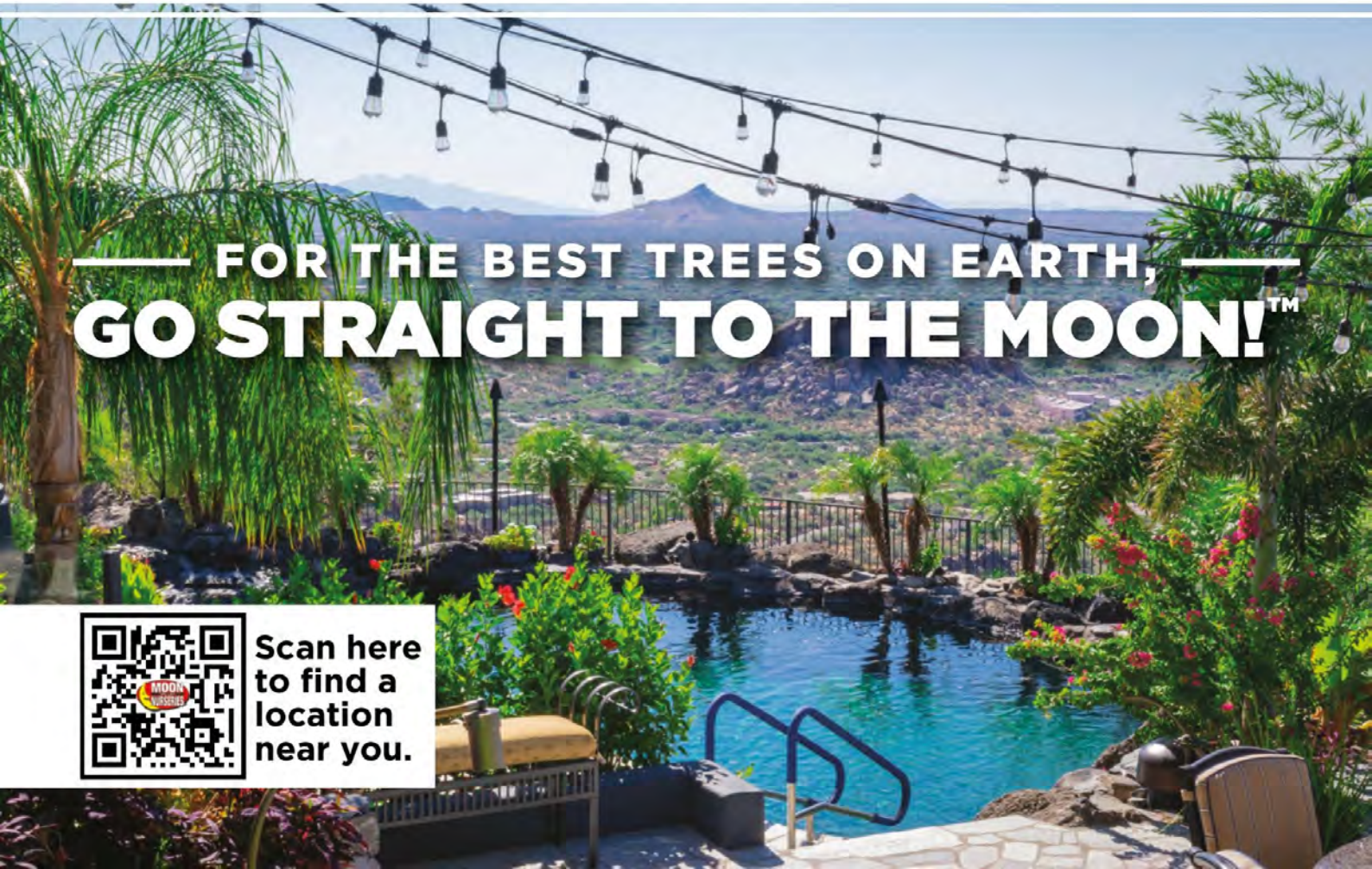

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SCORES & AWARDS

WEEK 5 / OCTOBER 6-10

Colts 12, BRONCOS 9 (OT)
Giants 27, PACKERS 22+
BILLS 38, Steelers 3
Chargers 30, BROWNS 28
Texans 13, JAGUARS 6
VIKINGS 29, Bears 22
PATRIOTS 29, Lions 0
SAINTS 39, Seahawks 32
JETS 40, Dolphins, 17
BUCCANEERS 21, Falcons 15
Titans 21, COMMANDERS 17
49ers 37, PANTHERS 15
Eagles 20, CARDINALS 17
Cowboys 22, RAMS 10
RAVENS 19, Bengals 17
CHIEFS 30, Raiders 29
+Played in London

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK
AFC Offense
Josh Allen, QB, Bills
AFC Defense
Matthew Judon, LB, Patriots
AFC Special Teams
Chase McLaughlin, K, Colts
NFC Offense
Taysom Hill, TE, Saints
NFC Defense
Micah Parsons, LB, Cowboys
NFC Special Teams
Cameron Dicker, K, Eagles
Pepsi Zero Sugar NFL Rookie
Sauce Gardner, CB, Jets

WEEK 6 / OCTOBER 13-17

Commanders 12, BEARS 7
FALCONS 28, 49ers 14
Patriots 38, BROWNS 15
Jets 27, PACKERS 10
COLTS 34, Jaguars 27
VIKINGS 24, Dolphins 16
Bengals 30, SAINTS 26
GIANTS 24, Ravens 20
STEELERS 20, Buccaneers 18
RAMS 24, Panthers 10
SEAHAWKS 19, Cardinals 9
Bills 24, CHIEFS 20
EAGLES 26, Cowboys 17
CHARGERS 19, Broncos 16 (OT)
Byes: Lions, Raiders, Texans, Titans

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK
AFC Offense
Josh Allen, QB, Bills
AFC Defense
Quinnen Williams, DL, Jets
AFC Special Teams
Dustin Hopkins, K, Chargers
NFC Offense
Marcus Mariota, QB, Falcons
NFC Defense
Tariq Woolen, CB, Seahawks
NFC Special Teams
Ryan Wright, P, Vikings
Pepsi Zero Sugar NFL Rookie
Breece Hall, RB, Jets

WEEK 7 / OCTOBER 20-24

CARDINALS 42, Saints 34
RAVENS 23, Browns 20
PANTHERS 21, Buccaneers 3
BENGALS 35, Falcons 17
COWBOYS 24, Lions 6
Giants 23, JAGUARS 17
TITANS 19, Colts 10
COMMANDERS 23, Packers 21
Jets 16, BRONCOS 9
RAIDERS 38, Texans 20
Seahawks 37, CHARGERS 23
Chiefs 44, 49ERS 23
DOLPHINS 16, Steelers 10
Bears 33, PATRIOTS 14
Byes: Bills, Eagles, Rams, Vikings

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK
AFC Offense
Joe Burrow, QB, Bengals
AFC Defense
Sauce Gardner, CB, Jets
AFC Special Teams
Randy Bullock, K, Titans
NFC Offense
Daniel Jones, QB, Giants
NFC Defense
Marco Wilson, CB, Cardinals
NFC Special Teams
Cairo Santos, K, Bears
Pepsi Zero Sugar NFL Rookie
Sauce Gardner, CB, Jets

WEEK 8 / OCTOBER 27-31

Ravens 27, BUCCANEERS 22
Broncos 21, JAGUARS 17+
FALCONS 37, Panthers 34 (OT)
COWBOYS 49, Bears 29
Dolphins 31, LIONS 27
VIKINGS 34, Cardinals 26
SAINTS 24, Raiders 0
Patriots 22, JETS 17
EAGLES 35, Steelers 13
Titans 17, TEXANS 10
Commanders 17, COLTS 16
49ers 31, RAMS 14
SEAHAWKS 27, Giants 13
BILLS 27, Packers 17
BROWNS 32, Bengals 13
+Played in London
Byes: Chargers, Chiefs

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK
AFC Offense
Derrick Henry, RB, Titans
AFC Defense
Dre'Mont Jones, DE, Broncos
AFC Special Teams
Nick Folk, K, Patriots
NFC Offense
Christian McCaffrey, RB, 49ers
NFC Defense
Za'Darius Smith, LB, Vikings
NFC Special Teams
Will Dissly, TE, Seahawks
Pepsi Zero Sugar NFL Rookie
Garrett Wilson, WR, Jets

Extra Points: Latavius Murray scored on a 2-yard TD run with 1:43 to go and K'waun Williams followed with a game-clinching interception as the Broncos edged Jacksonville, 21-17, in front of a Wembley Stadium crowd of 86,215, the largest in the history of NFL international games. … Derrick Henry recorded his sixth career 200-yard rushing game, finishing with 219 yards and a pair of touchdowns in the Titans' 17-10 win at Houston. … A.J. Brown caught first-half TD passes of 39, 27, and 29 yards in the Eagles' 35-13 victory over Pittsburgh. … Alvin Kamara accounted for 158 scrimmage yards and scored three touchdowns, while defensive end Payton Turner's two sacks sparked the defensive effort, as the Saints shut out Las Vegas, 24-0.

WEEK 9

The Seahawks and QB Geno Smith remained on a roll, pulling away from the Cardinals, 31-21, to give the NFC West frontrunners their fourth consecutive win. Smith threw a third-quarter pick-six that put Arizona in front, but he responded by directing touchdown drives of 75, 81, and 75 yards. "What a bounce back, what a fantastic finish to this game," Seahawks coach Pete Carroll said. Seattle went 7-of-7 on third down conversions on the first two of those drives, and didn't face a third down on the third. "Going three straight drives, finishing with touchdowns, they were long drives, tough drives," Smith said. "For us to go down, get scores, get touchdowns, it shows the type of team we are." Smith ended the day with 275 passing yards and two touchdowns, including a 9-yard toss to Tyler Lockett that put Seattle ahead for good. On defense, the Seahawks piled up four sacks, two of those by linebacker Uchenna Nwosu, and limited the Cardinals to 262 total yards.

Extra Points: Zach Wilson threw a third-quarter touchdown pass to James Robinson, Greg Zuerlein kicked the go-ahead 28-yard field goal, and Jordan Whitehead and Sauce Gardner collected interceptions to key the Jets' 20-17 win over Buffalo. … Tom Brady became the first player to reach 100,000 career passing yards (including playoffs), throwing for 280 yards – the last of those coming on the game-winning TD pass to Cade Otton – to lift the Buccaneers past the Rams, 16-13. … Joe Mixon scored five touchdowns – rushing for four and catching another – while totaling 211 scrimmage yards in the Bengals' 42-21 victory over Carolina. … Philadelphia defeated Houston, 29-17, to improve to 8-0 for the first time in franchise history.

WEEK 9 / NOVEMBER 3-7

Eagles 29, TEXANS 17
Chargers 20, FALCONS 17
Dolphins 35, BEARS 32
BENGALS 42, Panthers 21
LIONS 15, Packers 9
JAGUARS 27, Raiders 20
PATRIOTS 26, Colts 3
JETS 20, Bills 17
Vikings 20, COMMANDERS 17
Seahawks 31, CARDINALS 21
BUCCANEERS 16, Rams 13
CHIEFS 20, Titans 17 (OT)
Ravens 27, SAINTS 13
Byes: Broncos, Browns, Cowboys, 49ers, Giants, Steelers

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK
AFC Offense
Joe Mixon, RB, Bengals
AFC Defense
Justin Houston, LB, Ravens
AFC Special Teams
Cameron Dicker, K, Chargers
NFC Offense
Justin Fields, QB, Bears
NFC Defense
Kerby Joseph, S, Lions
NFC Special Teams
Jake Camarda, P, Buccaneers
Pepsi Zero Sugar NFL Rookie
Sauce Gardner, CB, Jets

BENGALS BOUND INTO FORM

Five-game winning streak highlighted by victories in playoff rematches

WITH THE SEASON'S STRETCH RUN LOOMING, the Bengals looked ready to make a charge.

The defending AFC champs were riding the momentum of a five-game winning streak, among those victories an exhilarating 27-24 decision over the Chiefs in Week 13 in a rematch of the 2021 conference title game.

For two teams known for offense, big defensive plays helped dictate the outcome. The Chiefs owned a four-point fourth-quarter lead and had the ball when Cincinnati linebacker Germaine Pratt forced a fumble that he recovered near midfield. QB Joe Burrow then marched the Bengals for what proved to be the game-winning touchdown, capped by his 8-yard scoring throw to Chris Evans with 8:54 remaining.

Joe Burrow's 27 TD passes through 13 games ranked second in the NFL, and he scored another five touchdowns on the ground.

Kansas City would get the ball just one more time and was forced into a long field-goal attempt when defensive end Joseph Ossai sacked Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes on a third down play from the Bengals 33. The kick sailed wide right, and the Bengals' offense took the field and converted three first downs to run out the clock.

"Let's keep this train rolling," said Burrow, who threw for 286 yards and scored the game's first touchdown on a 4-yard run. "This team knows what it takes to win these games. We've been there. It's December. It's time to separate ourselves."

NFL STANDINGS THROUGH WEEK 14

**Clinched playoff berth*

AFC EAST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Bills	10-3-0	.769	353	221
Dolphins	8-5-0	.615	316	312
Patriots	7-6-0	.538	276	239
Jets	7-6-0	.538	264	243

AFC NORTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Ravens	9-4-0	.692	301	250
Bengals	9-4-0	.692	335	265
Browns	5-8-0	.385	300	323
Steelers	5-8-0	.385	277	293

AFC SOUTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Titans	7-6-0	.538	241	276
Jaguars	5-8-0	385	294	294
Colts	4-8-1	.346	209	298
Texans	1-11-1	.115	211	314

AFC WEST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Chiefs	10-3-0	.769	384	298
Chargers	7-6-0	.538	295	326
Raiders	5-8-0	.385	308	313
Broncos	3-10-0	.231	194	238

NFC EAST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Eagles*	12-1-0	.923	386	248
Cowboys	10-3-0	.769	360	229
Commanders	7-5-1	.577	253	256
Giants	7-5-1	.577	267	300

NFC NORTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Vikings	10-3-0	.769	312	313
Lions	6-7-0	.462	349	347
Packers	5-8-0	.385	263	302
Bears	3-10-0	.231	270	333

NFC SOUTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Buccaneers	6-7-0	.462	224	254
Panthers	5-8-0	.385	260	290
Falcons	5-8-0	.385	288	312
Saints	4-9-0	.308	265	297

NFC WEST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
49ers	9-4-0	.692	317	197
Seahawks	7-6-0	.538	342	334
Cardinals	4-9-0	.308	277	348
Rams	4-9-0	.308	218	296

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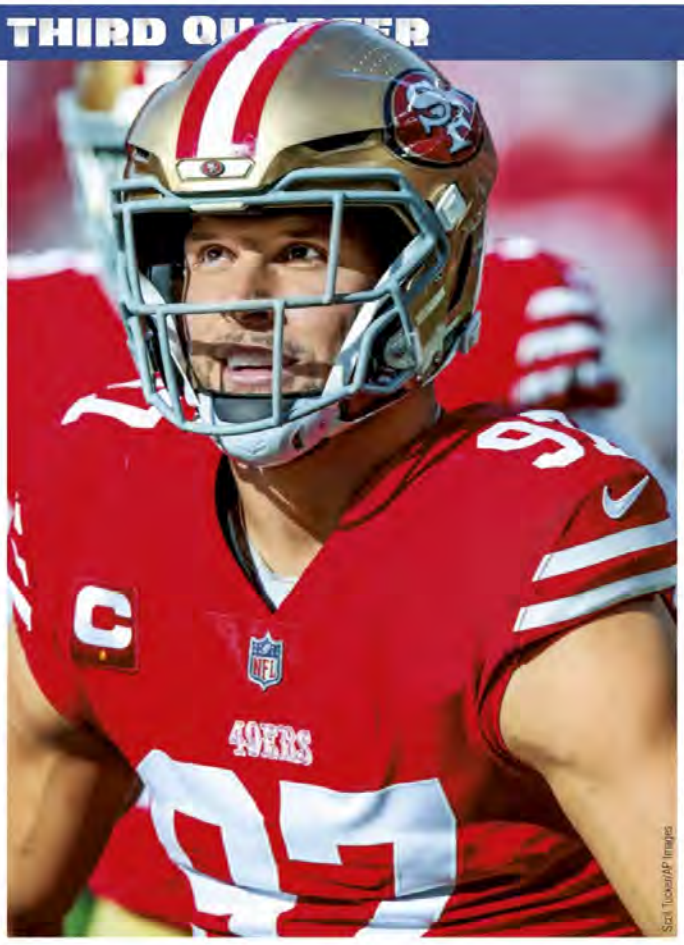

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With 15.5 sacks through 13 games, Nick Bosa was the catalyst for a 49ers defense that was allowing an NFL-low 15.2 ppg.

A.J. Brown came up big in Week 13 against the Titans, with TDs of 40 and 29 yards among his eight catches in the Eagles' 35-10 victory.

Cincinnati prevailed in another rematch from the 2021 playoffs in Week 12, edging the Titans, 20-16, on Burrow's 27-yard TD pass to Tee Higgins with 13:42 to play. In Week 11, Samaje Perine had three TD receptions, the most ever by a Bengals running back in a game, to key a 37-30 win at Pittsburgh. Cincinnati also downed division rival Cleveland for the first time since 2019, a 23-10 victory punctuated by three fourth-down stops, linebacker Logan Wilson's 17 tackles, and a late interception from free safety Jessie Bates III.

"We're just imposing our will on people," Bates said. "The thing is we're confident. We're playing really physical as a defense. All around. It gives our offense confidence. It gives them an opportunity to score points."

WEEK 10

Considering all the big plays, drama, and momentum shifts in the Vikings' 33-30 overtime victory against the Bills, calling it the NFL's "Game of the Year" seemed like an understatement. Buffalo built a big early lead, and even after Minnesota's Dalvin Cook broke loose for an 81-yard TD run, found itself ahead, 27-17, late in the third quarter. The Bills then drove deep into Vikings territory with an opportunity to pull away, but cornerback Patrick Peterson ended the threat with an end zone interception. The Vikings would draw closer on C.J. Ham's 3-yard TD run, and came within inches of another touchdown before being stopped on downs with 49 seconds left in regulation. Just when the game appeared to be over, however, the Bills fumbled and Vikings linebacker Erik Hendricks fell on the loose ball for a go-ahead touchdown. Buffalo managed to push the game into overtime on a last-second field goal, but that's where Minnesota's Greg Joseph made a 33-yard field goal and Peterson iced the game with his second interception of the day. "I'm going to remember this one forever," Vikings coach Kevin O'Connell said. "We just had to continue to trade those blows, body blows, haymakers, and just try to be ready for the next snap, as long as they let us continue to play."

Extra Points: The Buccaneers captured the first NFL regular-season game played in Germany, edging the Seahawks, 21-16, at Allianz Arena in Munich. Tom Brady threw for 258 yards and two touchdowns, including a 31-yard strike to Julio Jones for the first points scored on German soil. … Tua Tagovailoa passed for 285 yards and three TDs to power the Dolphins past the Browns, 39-17. … Christian Watson caught three TD passes and Mason Crosby kicked the game-winning 28-yard field goal in the Packers' 31-28 overtime victory against Dallas. … Detroit erupted for three fourth-quarter touchdowns – on D'Andre Swift's 9-yard run, Jeff Okudah's 20-yard interception return, and Jamaal Williams' 1-yard run – to upend the Bears, 31-30. … Christian McCaffrey's 2-yard TD run put the 49ers ahead for good and safety Talanoa Hufanga intercepted a late pass to help the 49ers edge the Chargers, 22-16. … Washington forced four turnovers, including an interception by Darrick Forrest, and Joey Slye kicked four field goals as the Commanders handed the Eagles their first loss of the season, 32-21.

WEEK 11

Mid-season momentum continued to build for the Lions and the Commanders, who both scored impressive road wins. Detroit won for the third consecutive week, getting a 31-18 victory over the Giants

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"BEING A LITTLE KID, WATCHING THAT GUY KILL IT THROUGHOUT ALL THESE YEARS IN SUPER BOWLS, TO BE ABLE TO GIVE HIM A HIGH FIVE AT THE END WAS PRETTY COOL."

— 49ERS QB BROCK PURDY, ON MEETING TOM BRADY ON THE FIELD AFTER HIS TEAM'S WEEK 14 WIN OVER TAMPA BAY

behind Jamaal Williams' three rushing touchdowns and rookie defensive lineman Aidan Hutchinson's interception and fumble recovery. "Everything that we said we had to do and needed to do to beat this team, we did that for almost all of the game," said coach Dan Campbell, whose squad improved to 4-6 and eclipsed its 2021 win total. "These guys are playing their [butts] off, and they're starting to figure out a way to win." Washington won for the fifth time in six games, jumping on the Texans early and cruising to a 23-10 triumph. Kendall Fuller opened the scoring with a 37-yard interception-return touchdown on the third play from scrimmage and Curtis Samuel followed with a 10-yard TD run during a first half that saw the Commanders outgain Houston, 246-5. Montez Sweat and Jonathan Allen had two sacks apiece for the victors, who were part of an NFC East that saw all four teams above .500. "There's some really cool stuff going on right now as this team's starting to grow," Commanders coach Ron Rivera said.

Extra Points: The season's final international game saw the 49ers ride the arm of Jimmy Garoppolo (20 of 29, 228 yards, 4 TDs) to a 38-10 victory over Arizona in front of 78,427 fans at Mexico City's Estadio Azteca. … Cordarrelle Patterson's 103-yard kickoff-return touchdown was the ninth of his career, setting an NFL record and keying the Falcons' 27-24 comeback win over Chicago. … Even more dramatic was Marcus Jones' 84-yard punt-return touchdown with five seconds remaining in regulation that pushed the Patriots past the Jets, 10-3. … Tony Pollard racked up 189 scrimmage yards (109 receiving, 80 rushing) and two touchdown receptions and Micah Parsons added two sacks and a forced fumble in the Cowboys' 40-3 win over Minnesota. … Davante Adams caught a 35-yard TD on the first possession of overtime to give Las Vegas a 22-16 victory over Denver. … Patrick Mahomes and Travis Kelce teamed up for three touchdowns – the last of those a 17-yard go-ahead score in the final minute – as the Chiefs edged the Chargers, 30-27.

- Sean McDermott's Bills reached the 10-win mark for the fourth consecutive season and were closing in on a third straight AFC East title.
- The Falcons' Cordarrelle Patterson set the NFL record with his ninth career kickoff-return TD in a Week 11 victory over the Bears.

WEEK 12

Aggressive decisions by the Jaguars and the Chargers to go for the win in the final moments of regulation proved rewarding. Jacksonville clipped the Ravens, 28-27, thanks to Trevor Lawrence's 10-yard touchdown pass to Marvin Jones with 14 seconds remaining and Zay Jones' reception on the ensuing two-point conversion attempt. "We've been on the wrong side of these a lot," said Lawrence, who threw for 321 yards and marched his team 75 yards for the final TD. "To win games like this, it's awesome. Nothing like it." In the Chargers' game against Arizona, Austin Ekeler's 1-yard TD grab with 15 seconds to play narrowed his team's deficit to a point, and quarterback Justin Herbert then found Gerald Everett open for the two-point conversion to lift Los Angeles to a 25-24 win. "We just believed in each other," said Herbert, who completed 35 of 47 passes for 274 yards and three TDs. "That's one of those plays that we've repped a ton over the last couple of years. Gerald ran a great route, made a great catch." The last time a team scored the winning points on a two-point conversion later in a game was 2018, when the Chargers did it against the Chiefs with four seconds to play.

With playmaker Amon-Ra St. Brown electrifying the offense, the Lions found themselves climbing into the NFC playoff picture.

Taylor Heinicke went 5-1-1 in his first seven starts, providing a spark for the Commanders in the competitive NFC East.

Matt Patterson/AP Images

Extra Points: Josh Jacobs totaled 303 scrimmage yards (229 rushing, 74 receiving) and rushed for two touchdowns, the second of those an 86-yard burst in overtime, lifting the Raiders to a 40-34 victory at Seattle. … The Browns rallied past Tampa Bay, 23-17 in overtime, tying the game on David Njoku's 12-yard TD reception in the final minute of regulation and winning on Nick Chubb's 3-yard scoring run with 19 seconds left in the extra session. … Mike White completed 22 of 28 passes for 315 yards and three touchdowns to spark the Jets' 31-10 win over the Bears. … Kirk Cousins threw three touchdown passes, including a tie-breaking 15-yarder to Adam Thielen in the fourth quarter, and Kene Nwangwu brought back a kickoff 97 yards for another score in the Vikings' 33-26 victory over the Patriots. …Tyler Bass' 45-yard field goal with two seconds to play proved the difference in the Bills' 28-25 win over Detroit. … Jalen Hurts and Miles Sanders combined for 310 of the Eagles' 363 rushing yards, the second-most in franchise history, and Hurts threw for another 153 yards and two TDs, in a 40-33 win over Green Bay.

WEEK 13

Aided by four fourth-quarter turnovers, Dallas went on a 33-point scoring spree to break open a close contest against the Colts and win for the fifth time in six games, 54-19. The Cowboys led by just two before Dak Prescott found Michael Gallup for a 3-yard touchdown pass with 13:52 remaining, and on Indianapolis' next play from scrimmage, safety Malik Hooker scooped up a fumble and raced 38 yards for another Dallas TD. Cornerback DaRon Bland then ended the next two Colts possessions with interceptions, setting up scoring runs by

Tampa Bay's 17-16 comeback win over the Saints in Week 13 was the fourth-most improbable of the Nex Gen Stats era (0.7%). The Bucs trailed 16-3 with 5:34 remaining.

Tony Pollard and Ezekiel Elliott, and a Sam Williams fumble recovery led to the Cowboys' final TD on a 23-yard Malik Davis run. The 33 points equaled the third-most by an NFL team in a game's fourth quarter. "I knew I was going to make some plays, but plays like that – I wouldn't dream in a million years," Hooker said of his fumble-return score. "I wasn't expecting that, but I'm happy I performed the way I did, for the sake of the defense." Hooker also had two tackles and added a second-quarter interception that set up a Dallas touchdown just before halftime.

Extra Points: The Browns took a unique path to their 27-14 win at Houston, scoring touchdowns on a fumble return by Denzel Ward, an interception return by Tony Fields, and a punt return from Donovan Peoples-Jones. … Davante Adams had eight receptions for 177 yards and two touchdowns in the Raiders' 27-20 win over the Chargers. … Christian Watson scored touchdowns on a 46-yard run and a 14-yard reception to help the Packers erase a 10-point deficit and defeat Chicago, 28-19. … Safety Minkah Fitzpatrick contributed seven tackles and an interception in the Steelers' 19-16 win at Atlanta. … Christian McCaffrey caught eight passes, including a 3-yard second-quarter touchdown that put the 49ers ahead for good in their 33-17 victory over the Dolphins. … Camryn Bynum's goal-line interception with

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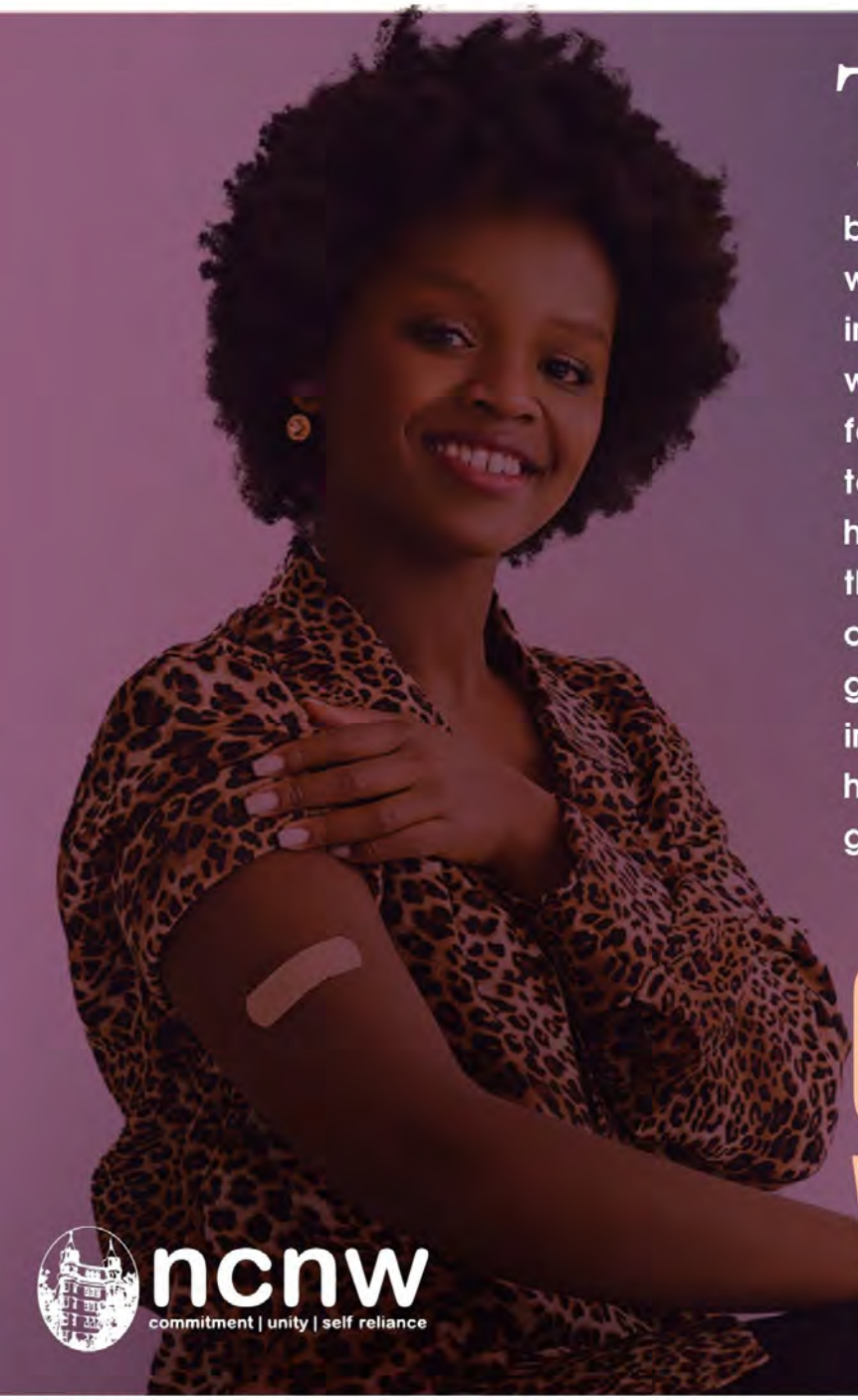

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SCORES & AWARDS

WEEK 10 / NOVEMBER 10-14

PANTHERS 25, Falcons 15
BUCCANEERS 21, Seahawks 16+
Vikings 33, BILLS 30 (OT)
Lions 31, BEARS 30
CHIEFS 27, Jaguars 17
DOLPHINS 39, Browns 17
GIANTS 24, Texans 16
STEELERS 20, Saints 10
TITANS 17, Broncos 10
Colts 25, RAIDERS 20
PACKERS 31, Cowboys 28 (OT)
Cardinals 27, RAMS 17
49ERS 22, Chargers 16
Commanders 32, EAGLES 21
+Played in Munich
Byes: Bengals, Jets, Patriots, Ravens

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK
AFC Offense
Jonathan Taylor, RB, Colts
AFC Defense
Alex Highsmith, LB, Steelers
AFC Special Teams
Ryan Stonehouse, P, Titans
NFC Offense
Justin Jefferson, WR, Vikings
NFC Defense
Devin White, LB, Buccaneers
NFC Special Teams
Joey Slye, K, Commanders
Pepsi Zero Sugar NFL Rookie
Christian Watson, WR, Packers

WEEK 11 / NOVEMBER 17-21

Titans 27, PACKERS 17
FALCONS 27, Bears 24
RAVENS 13, Panthers 3
BILLS 31, Browns 23*
Commanders 23, TEXANS 10
Eagles 17, COLTS 16
PATRIOTS 10, Jets 3
SAINTS 27, Rams 20
Lions 31, GIANTS 18
Raiders 22, BRONCOS 16 (OT)
Cowboys 40, VIKINGS 3
Bengals 37, STEELERS 30
Chiefs 30, CHARGERS 27
49ers 38, CARDINALS 10+
**Played in Detroit*
+Played in Mexico
Byes: Buccaneers, Dolphins, Jaguars, Seahawks

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK
AFC Offense
Travis Kelce, TE, Chiefs
AFC Defense
Matt Milano, LB, Bills
AFC Special Teams
Marcus Jones, DB, Patriots
NFC Offense
Tony Pollard, RB, Cowboys
NFC Defense
Aidan Hutchinson, DL, Lions
NFC Special Teams
Cordarrelle Patterson, RB, Falcons
Pepsi Zero Sugar NFL Rookie
Aidan Hutchinson, DE, Lions

WEEK 12 / NOVEMBER 24-28

Bills 28, LIONS 25
COWBOYS 28, Giants 20
VIKINGS 33, Patriots 26
PANTHERS 23, Broncos 10
BROWNS 23, Buccaneers 17 (OT)
JAGUARS 28, Ravens 27
DOLPHINS 30, Texans 15
JETS 31, Bears 10
Bengals 20, TITANS 16
COMMANDERS 19, Falcons 13
Chargers 25, CARDINALS 24
Raiders 40, SEAHAWKS 34 (OT)
CHIEFS 26, Rams 10
49ERS 13, Saints 0
EAGLES 40, Packers 33
Steelers 24, COLTS 17

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK
AFC Offense
Josh Jacobs, RB, Raiders
AFC Defense
Ed Oliver, DT, Bills
AFC Special Teams
JK Scott, P, Chargers
NFC Offense
Jalen Hurts, QB, Eagles
NFC Defense
Brian Burns, DE, Panthers
NFC Special Teams
Kene Nwangwu, RB, Vikings
Pepsi Zero Sugar NFL Rookie
Garrett Wilson, WR, Jets

WEEK 13 / DECEMBER 1-5

Bills 24, PATRIOTS 10
Steelers 19, FALCONS 16
RAVENS 10, Broncos 9
Packers 28, BEARS 19
LIONS 40, Jaguars 14
Browns 27, TEXANS 14
VIKINGS 27, Jets 22
GIANTS 20, Commanders 20 (OT)
EAGLES 35, Titans 10
Seahawks 27, RAMS 23
49ERS 33, Dolphins 17
BENGALS 27, Chiefs 24
RAIDERS 27, Chargers 20
COWBOYS 54, Colts 19
BUCCANEERS 17, Saints 16
Byes: Cardinals, Panthers

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK
AFC Offense
Joe Burrow, QB, Bengals
AFC Defense
Chandler Jones, DE, Raiders
AFC Special Teams
Donovan Peoples-Jones, WR, Browns
NFC Offense
Jalen Hurts, QB, Eagles
NFC Defense
Nick Bosa, DL, 49ers
NFC Special Teams
Michael Badgley, K, Lions
Pepsi Zero Sugar NFL Rookie
Garrett Wilson, WR, Jets

10 seconds remaining preserved the Vikings' 27-22 triumph over the Jets. … Tom Brady set an NFL record with his 44th career come-from-behind fourth quarter/OT win, rallying the Buccaneers with two touchdown passes in the final five minutes – the game-winner coming on a 6-yard throw to Rachaad White – to edge the Saints, 17-16.

WEEK 14

Not only did the Eagles' 48-22 win over the Giants make them the first team to clinch a playoff berth, they achieved a few milestones along the way. Jalen Hurts became the first NFL quarterback to record at least 10 rushing touchdowns in back-to-back seasons, while linebacker Haason Reddick became the first player with 10-or-more sacks in three consecutive seasons while playing for three different teams. Hurts finished the day with 294 total yards (217 passing, 77 rushing) and three touchdowns (two passing, one rushing), while Reddick had one of the Eagles' seven sacks. Miles Sanders rushed for 144 yards in the win and put Philly on the board first with a 3-yard TD run, and Hurts followed with scoring passes to DeVonta Smith (41 yards on fourth down) and A.J. Brown (33 yards) that extended the margin to 21-0 midway through the second quarter. "We're not done yet," said defensive end Brandon Graham, who had a team-leading three sacks. "I feel great, just us reaching our goals: making the playoffs. We've got so much more game and ball to go. We've got to make sure we finish like we want to. A great first step."

Extra Points: Ezekiel Elliott's 2-yard touchdown run with 41 seconds remaining capped a 98-yard drive and allowed the Cowboys to slip past upset-minded Houston, 27-23. … Making his first appearance with the Rams, QB Baker Mayfield directed a 98-yard drive in the closing minutes that ended with his 23-yard touchdown pass to Van Jefferson for a 17-16 victory over the Raiders. … Trevor Lawrence threw for 368 yards and three TDs, two of those to Evan Engram, in the Jaguars' 36-22 win at Tennessee. … Brock Purdy's first NFL start was a successful one, completing 16 of 21 passes, two for touchdowns, while rushing for another score to lead the 49ers past the Buccaneers, 35-7. … Ja'Marr Chase caught 10 passes for 119 yards and one TD in the Bengals' 23-10 win over Cleveland. … Justin Herbert became the first QB in NFL history with 13,000 passing yards in his first three seasons, throwing for 367 yards and one TD to pace the Chargers' 23-17 victory over Miami.

WEEK 14 / DECEMBER 8-12

RAMS 17, Raiders 16
BILLS 20, Jets 12
BENGALS 23, Browns 10
COWBOYS 27, Texans 23
LIONS 34, Vikings 23
Eagles 48, GIANTS 22
Ravens 16, STEELERS 14
Jaguars 36, TITANS 22
Chiefs 34, BRONCOS 28
Panthers 30, SEAHAWKS 24
49ERS 35, Buccaneers 7
CHARGERS 23, Dolphins 17
Patriots 27, CARDINALS 13
Byes: Bears, Colts, Commanders, Falcons, Packers, Saints

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK
AFC Offense
Trevor Lawrence, QB, Jaguars
AFC Defense
Josh Uche, LB, Patriots
AFC Special Teams
Calais Campbell, DE, Ravens
NFC Offense
Baker Mayfield, QB, Rams
NFC Defense
Brandon Graham, DE, Eagles
NFC Special Teams
Eddy Pineiro, K, Panthers
Pepsi Zero Sugar NFL Rookie
Bam Knight, RB, Jets

CHIEFS CHARGE INTO PLAYOFFS

Kansas City closes out regular season with five consecutive victories to finish 14-3.

ALL ROADS TO AFC DOMINANCE were again going through Kansas City, where the Chiefs ended the regular season as one of the league's hottest teams. They clinched their seventh consecutive AFC West title in Week 15 and locked up the conference's top seed by defeating Las Vegas on the season's final weekend.

"When we start every season, the first thing we get told when we walk in is, 'Let's win the AFC West,'" said quarterback Patrick Mahomes, whose 5,250 passing yards and 41 TD passes led the NFL. "That's our first goal."

They accomplished that with a 30-24 overtime win against the Texans in which Mahomes set the NFL record for best single-game completion percentage (36 of 41, 87.8) among players with at least 40 attempts. Yet the game wasn't decided until Willie Gay recovered a Texans fumble in the extra session and Jerick McKinnon sprinted 26 yards for a touchdown on the next play.

A week later, the Chiefs made it 16 in a row against NFC opponents by flexing some defensive muscle in a 24-10 victory over the Seahawks. K.C. stopped Seattle twice on key fourth down plays and Juan Thornhill had an end zone interception.

Building on his legacy during the Chiefs' 14-3 season, Travis Kelce set career highs for receptions (110) and TD catches (12).

Scott Winters/AP Images

FINAL 2022 NFL STANDINGS

*+Division Champion *Wild Card*

AFC EAST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Bills+	13-3-0	.813	445	286
Dolphins*	9-8-0	.529	397	399
Patriots	8-9-0	.471	364	347
N.Y. Jets	7-10-0	.412	296	316

AFC NORTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Bengals+	12-4-0	.750	418	322
Ravens*	10-7-0	.588	350	315
Steelers	9-8-0	.529	308	346
Browns	7-10-0	.412	361	381

AFC SOUTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Jaguars+	9-8-0	.529	404	350
Titans	7-10-0	.412	298	359
Colts	4-12-1	.265	289	427
Texans	3-13-1	.206	289	420

AFC WEST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Chiefs+	14-3-0	.824	496	369
Chargers*	10-7-0	.588	391	384
Raiders	6-11-0	.353	395	418
Broncos	5-12-0	.294	287	359

NFC EAST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Eagles+	14-3-0	.824	477	344
Cowboys*	12-5-0	.706	467	342
Giants*	9-7-1	.559	365	371
Commanders	8-8-1	.500	321	343

NFC NORTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Vikings+	13-4-0	.765	424	427
Lions	9-8-0	.529	453	427
Packers	8-9-0	.471	370	371
Bears	3-14-0	.176	326	463

NFC SOUTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Buccaneers+	8-9-0	.471	313	358
Panthers	7-10-0	.412	347	374
Saints	7-10-0	.412	330	345
Falcons	7-10-0	.412	365	386

NFC WEST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
49ers+	13-4-0	.765	450	277
Seahawks*	9-8-0	.529	407	401
Rams	5-12-0	.294	307	384
Cardinals	4-13-0	.235	340	449

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Week 17 brought more of the same in a 27-24 win over the Broncos. McKinnon caught two touchdown passes and became the first NFL running back since 1970 with a receiving TD in five consecutive games, while Mahomes joined Tom Brady and Drew Brees as the only quarterbacks to throw for 5,000+ yards in more than one season. Yet victory wasn't secured until Chris Jones sacked Denver QB Russell Wilson near midfield on a fourth down play in the final minute.

- Mike Evans was unstoppable in the Bucs' Week 17 win over Carolina that clinched the NFC South, catching three touchdown passes.
- Minkah Fitzpatrick was part of a stout defense that helped the Steelers post their 19th consecutive season with a 500-or-better record.

The Chiefs then wrapped up the regular season in convincing fashion with a 31-13 win over the Raiders. McKinnon caught a TD pass for the sixth straight game, Thornhill grabbed a second-quarter interception that led to another touchdown, and linebacker Nick Bolton had 16 tackles to give him a franchise-record 180 on the season.

"You still have to take care of business, and our guys understand that. We'll give them a few days off there next week, and then get them back in toward the end of the week and get some practice in there," said coach Andy Reid, whose team received a first-round bye after entering the postseason as the AFC's No. 1 seed for the third time in five years. "Then we'll start the regular week after that, but they'll take a step back, and get themselves where they feel stronger and healthier – mentally and physically. It's a good thing."

WEEK 15

A season made famous by comebacks took it to an extreme level in Week 15, with the biggest rally in NFL history and three teams battling back to win after trailing by 17-or-more points, the first time that's happened in a single week. The Vikings found themselves down to the Colts, 33-0, at halftime, before Kirk Cousins threw four second-half touchdown passes, the last of those a screen to Dalvin Cook that went for 64 yards and closed the gap to 36-34 with 2:15 remaining in regulation. A Cousins-to-T.J. Hockenson two-point conversion tied things up, and Greg Joseph's 40-yard field goal in overtime won it for the Vikings, 39-36, who clinched the NFC North title. The Jaguars used a pair of Trevor Lawrence-to-Zay Jones TD passes to help overcome a 17-point second-half deficit against the Cowboys and came out on top, 40-34 in overtime, on Rayshawn Jenkins' 52-yard interception-return touchdown. "That's a play you dream about ever since you're 8 years old, to be the guy to make a play like that for us to get that win," said Jenkins, who finished the day with 18 tackles and also intercepted a third-quarter pass that set up a Jacksonville touchdown. Joe Burrow and the Bengals spotted host Tampa Bay a 17-0 lead before forcing four second-half turnovers and reeling off 34 consecutive points en route to a 34-23 victory. "When we get in these situations, we never panic. We know somebody's going to make a play," said Burrow, who finished with 200 yards passing and four touchdowns.

Justin Herbert led a four-game late-season winning streak that put the Chargers into the playoffs for the first time since 2018.

The Vikings' Kevin O'Connell was one of five first-year head coaches to take his team to the postseason.

Matt Ludtke/AP Images

Extra Points: The 49ers wrapped up the NFC West title by defeating Seattle, 21-13, with Brock Purdy connecting with George Kittle on a pair of TD passes. … Chandler Jones grabbed a backwards pass and sprinted 48 yards for a touchdown on the game's final play to give the Raiders a 30-24 victory over the Patriots. … Brock Wright took a short fourth-and-1 pass from Jared Goff and raced 51 yards for a TD with 1:49 remaining that lifted the Lions past the Jets, 20-17. … Kayvon Thibodeaux had 12 tackles and a strip-sack that he recovered for a touchdown as part of the Giants' 20-12 win over Washington. … Jalen Hurts threw for 315 yards and rushed for three TDs to lead the Eagles to a 25-20 victory over Chicago. … The Bills scored on their final two possessions – a 5-yard Josh Allen-to-Dawson Knox TD pass and Tyler Bass' 25-yard field goal as time expired – to edge the Dolphins, 32-29. … Cameron Dicker's 43-yard field goal with four seconds to play was the difference in the Chargers' 17-14 victory over Tennessee.

WEEK 16

On a night they celebrated the 50th anniversary of the "Immaculate Reception," and just days after Franco Harris, the hero of that play, passed away, the Steelers recreated a bit of drama – with a dash of irony – in a last-minute 13-10 win over the Raiders at Acrisure Stadium. Harris, who as a rookie caught a deflected pass in a 1972 playoff game against the Raiders and ran it for the game-winning touchdown, was remembered in an emotional halftime ceremony that saw his No. 32 retired. The Steelers, though, trailed by four points when they took possession at their own 24 with time winding down in the fourth quarter. Stepping up in the moment, rookie QB Kenny Pickett completed seven of nine passes on the drive, including three each to tight end Pat Freiermuth (a Penn State grad like Harris) and a running back (Najee Harris) with the same last name as the night's honoree. Pickett also ran for a fourth-down conversion before putting his team ahead with a 14-yard TD pass to fellow rookie George Pickens with 46 seconds to play. Cam Sutton's interception put an end to Las Vegas' final threat. "I'm just so thankful of the effort of the guys. We had a chance to be a part of Steeler history tonight, and we don't take that lightly," said head coach Mike Tomlin.

Of the season's 271 games, 122 were decided by a touchdown (six points or less), the most in a single season in NFL history.

Extra Points: Devin Singletary's 33-yard third-quarter touchdown run put the Bills ahead on their way to a 35-13 win at Chicago that clinched the team's third consecutive AFC East title. … The Ravens and the defending AFC champion Bengals each locked up playoff berths on the weekend. Baltimore's defense yielded just three field goals as part of a 17-9 victory over Atlanta, while Cincinnati took a big early lead at New England and then hung on for a 22-18 victory thanks to Josh Tupou's red-zone fumble recovery with under two minutes remaining. … The Vikings set an NFL record with their 11th one-score win, edging the Giants, 27-24, behind Kirk Cousins' three TD passes, Justin Jefferson's 12 receptions, and Greg Joseph's tie-breaking 61-yard field goal as time expired. … D'Onta Foreman and Chuba Hubbard each topped 100 rushing yards in the first half – the first time since 2006 teammates did

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"YOU JUST NEED FIVE TOUCHDOWNS. THAT'S NOTHING."

— VIKINGS CB PATRICK PETERSON, TO TEAMMATES WHEN TRAILING THE COLTS, 33-0, AT HALFTIME IN WEEK 15 BEFORE RALLYING FOR A 39-36 WIN

that in the same game – before finishing with 165 and 125, respectively, in the Panthers' 37-23 win over Detroit. … CeeDee Lamb caught touchdown passes of 36 and 7 yards and Brett Maher kicked a pair of fourth-quarter field goals to key Dallas' 40-34 win over the Eagles.

WEEK 17

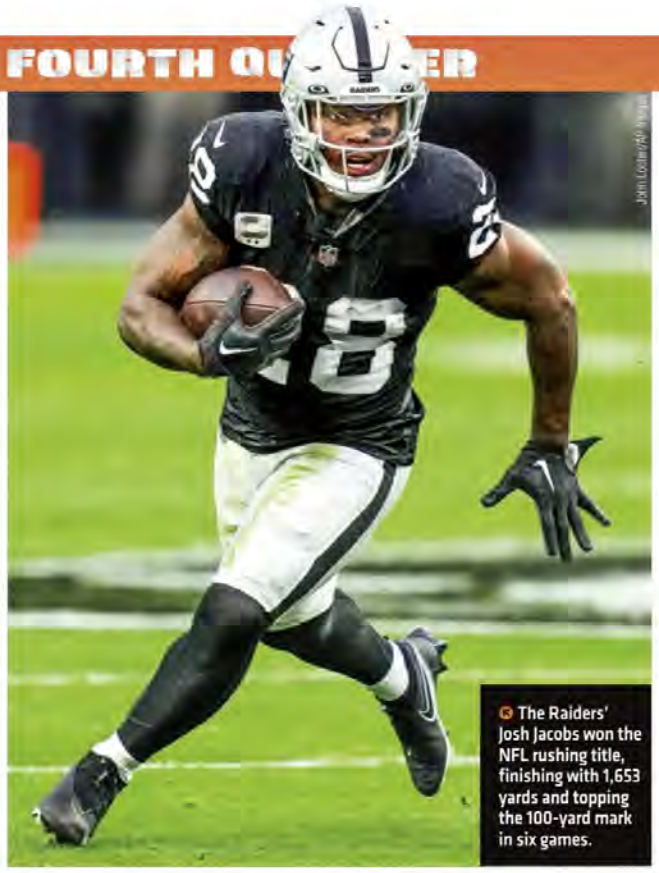
Behind another quick start and standout defensive play, Green Bay continued its late-season pursuit of an NFC wild card berth. The Packers won for the fourth consecutive week, dominating the Vikings, 41-17, at Lambeau Field. Minnesota had a chance to grab the early momentum after blocking a punt and taking over on the Green Bay 1-yard line, but the Packers' defense held and forced a field goal. The game flipped on the ensuing kickoff when Keisean Nixon raced 105 with the return for a touchdown that put the Packers in front 7-3. "Guys had great blocks for me," Nixon said. "They opened it up. I feel like it was open sea. I just ran through it." Minutes later, with the Vikings facing a fourth-and-2 at the Green Bay 37, cornerback Darnell Savage intercepted a deflected pass that he brought back 75 yards for another touchdown. Two Mason Crosby field goals and a 21-yard Aaron Rodgers-to-Robert Tonyan scoring pass made it 27-3 in favor of the hosts. Minnesota opened the third quarter by driving deep into Packers territory, but that's where Kenny Clark had a strip-sack of QB Kirk Cousins and recovered the loose ball. Green Bay then put the game away with a 2-yard A.J. Dillon touchdown run on the first play of the fourth quarter. "Momentum's a crazy thing that you really can't explain, and I do think there's something to that," Packers coach Matt LaFleur said. "Over the last four games, we've had 12 takeaways, and if you do that, you've got a good chance of winning the game."

- Bills fans showed their support for Damar Hamlin, the team's safety who was recovering after suffering cardiac arrest in a Week 17 game vs. the Bengals.
- Trevor Lawrence took big steps during his second NFL season, throwing 25 TD passes for the AFC South champ Jaguars.

Extra Points: Mike Evans caught 10 passes for 207 yards and three touchdowns, keying the Buccaneers' 30-24 victory over Carolina that clinched the NFC South title. … Giants QB Daniel Jones threw for two TDs and ran for two others in a 38-10 win over the Colts that secured the team's first playoff berth since 2016. … Justin Herbert fired a pair of touchdown passes and Austin Ekeler rushed for two scores to lead the Chargers past the Rams, 31-10. … James Houston led a dominant defensive effort with three sacks and a forced fumble in the Lions' 41-10 win at Chicago. … The Patriots became the first team in 20 years to score a defensive touchdown in four consecutive games, getting a 39-yard interception-return TD from Kyle Dugger as part of their 23-21 victory over Miami. … The Monday night Bengals-Bills game was suspended and ultimately cancelled with five minutes remaining in the first quarter when Bills safety Damar Hamlin suffered cardiac arrest after making a tackle.

WEEK 18

Five teams carried winning streaks of at least five games into the playoffs, but no team was hotter than the 49ers, who won their 10th in a row and locked up the NFC's No. 2 seed with a 38-13 victory over the Cardinals. After allowing an early touchdown, San Francisco answered with a 21-yard Brock Purdy-to-Christian McCaffrey scoring pass to take a lead it would never relinquish. Purdy also connected with George Kittle on a pair of TDs to become the second rookie QB



The Raiders' Josh Jacobs won the NFL rushing title, finishing with 1,653 yards and topping the 100-yard mark in six games.

in NFL history with multiple touchdown passes in six consecutive games. Other stars included Elijah Mitchell, who rushed for two TDs; Tashaun Gipson, whose two interceptions led to 10 49ers points; and Nick Bosa, who had his 13th game with a sack and finished the season with an NFL-leading 18.5. "I felt really good about our team when we won the division about a month ago, and I feel better about them now," coach Kyle Shanahan said. On the other side of the field, the game marked the last in the career of Cardinals defensive end J.J. Watt, who had two sacks and five QB pressures and was given a standing ovation by the fans at Levi's Stadium. "I know I still can (play)," Watt said afterwards. "I'm just choosing not to."

Extra Points: Josh Allen's 37-yard fumble-return touchdown with 2:51 remaining gave the Jaguars a 20-16 victory over the Titans and clinched the AFC South title for a team that one year earlier finished 3-14. … Jason Sanders kicked a tie-breaking 50-yard field goal with 18 seconds remaining and the Dolphins' defense added a safety on the game's final play to defeat the Jets, 11-6, clearing the path to an AFC wild card playoff berth. … Nyheim Hines had two kickoff-return TDs (96 and 101 yards) in the Bills' 35-23 win over New England, becoming the first player in NFL history to bring back two kickoffs for TDs in a game and also have a game with two punt-return touchdowns (2019 with the Colts). … By defeating the Browns, 28-14, the Steelers finished 9-8 and secured their 19th consecutive season with a .500-or-better record, tied for the second-longest streak in NFL history. … Minnesota's Justin Jefferson led the NFL in receptions (128) and receiving yards (1,809), the Raiders' Josh Jacobs won the league rushing title (1,653 yards), and Minkah Fitzpatrick (Steelers), C.J. Gardner-Johnson (Eagles), Justin Simmons (Broncos), and Tariq Woolen (Seahawks) each grabbed a league-leading six interceptions.

SCORES & AWARDS

WEEK 15 / DECEMBER 15-19

49ers 21, SEAHAWKS 13
VIKINGS 39, Colts 36 (OT)
BROWNS 13, Ravens 3
BILLS 32, Dolphins 29
Steelers 24, PANTHERS 16
Eagles 25, BEARS 20
Chiefs 30, TEXANS 24 (OT)
JAGUARS 40, Cowboys 34 (OT)
SAINTS 21, Falcons 18
Lions 20, JETS 17
BRONCOS 24, Cardinals 15
RAIDERS 30, Patriots 24
CHARGERS 17, Titans 14
Bengals 34, BUCCANEERS 23
Giants 20, Commanders 12
PACKERS 24, Rams 12

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK
AFC AFC Offense
Josh Allen, QB, Bills
AFC Defense
Rayshawn Jenkins, S, Jaguars
AFC Special Teams
Tommy Townsend, P, Chiefs
NFC Offense
Kirk Cousins, QB, Vikings
NFC Defense
Kayvon Thibodeaux, LB, Giants
NFC Special Teams
Kalif Raymond, WR, Lions
Pepsi Zero Sugar NFL Rookie
Jahan Dotson, WR, Commanders

WEEK 16 / DECEMBER 22-26

Jaguars 19, JETS 3
RAVENS 17, Falcons 9
PANTHERS 37, Lions 23
Bills 35, BEARS 13
Saints 17, BROWNS 10
CHIEFS 24, Seahawks 10
VIKINGS 27, Giants 24
Bengals 22, PATRIOTS 18
Texans 19, TITANS 14
49ERS 37, Commanders 20
COWBOYS 40, Eagles 34
STEELERS 13, Raiders 10
Packers 26, DOLPHINS 20
RAMS 51, Broncos 14
Buccaneers 19, CARDINALS 16 (OT)
Chargers 20, COLTS 3

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK
AFC Offense
Joe Burrow, QB, Bengals
AFC Defense
Cameron Heyward, DT, Steelers
AFC Special Teams
Riley Patterson, K, Jaguars
NFC Offense
D'Onta Foreman, RB, Panthers
NFC Defense
Nick Bosa, DL, 49ers
NFC Special Teams
Greg Joseph, K, Vikings
Pepsi Zero Sugar NFL Rookie
Brock Purdy, QB, 49ers

WEEK 17 / DECEMBER 29 - JANUARY 2

Cowboys 27, TITANS 13
FALCONS 20, Cardinals 19
LIONS 41, Bears 10
Jaguars 31, TEXANS 3
CHIEFS 27, Broncos 24
PATRIOTS 23, Dolphins 21
GIANTS 38, Colts 10
Saints 20, EAGLES 10
BUCCANEERS 30, Panthers 24
Browns 24, COMMANDERS 10
49ers 37, RAIDERS 34 (OT)
SEAHAWKS 23, Jets 6
PACKERS 41, Vikings 17
CHARGERS 31, Rams 10
Steelers 16, RAVENS 13
BENGALS vs. Bills (cancelled)

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK
AFC Offense
Austin Ekeler, RB, Chargers
AFC Defense
Kyle Dugger, DB, Patriots
AFC Special Teams
Corey Bojorquez, P, Browns
NFC Offense
Mike Evans, WR, Buccaneers
NFC Defense
Cameron Jordan, DE, Saints
NFC Special Teams
Keisean Nixon, CB, Packers
Pepsi Zero Sugar NFL Rookie
James Houston, LB, Lions

WEEK 18 / JANUARY 7-8

Chiefs 31, RAIDERS 13
JAGUARS 20, Titans 16
FALCONS 30, Buccaneers 17
BILLS 35, Patriots 23
Vikings 29, BEARS 13
BENGALS 27, Ravens 16
Texans 32, COLTS 31
DOLPHINS 11, Jets 6
Panthers 10, SAINTS 7
STEELERS 28, Browns 14
BRONCOS 31, Chargers 28
EAGLES 22, Giants 16
SEAHAWKS 19, Rams 16 (OT)
49ERS 38, Cardinals 13
COMMANDERS 26, Cowboys 6
Lions 20, PACKERS 16

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK
AFC Offense
Jerry Jeudy, WR, Broncos
AFC Defense
Josh Allen, LB, Jaguars
AFC Special Teams
Nyheim Hines, RB, Bills
NFC Offense
Jamaal Williams, RB, Lions
NFC Defense
Quandre Diggs, S, Seahawks
NFC Special Teams
Jake Elliott, K, Eagles
Pepsi Zero Sugar NFL Rookie
Brock Purdy, QB, 49ers

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AFC WILD CARD

JAGUARS 31, Chargers 30

Not only did Jacksonville stage the third-biggest comeback in NFL playoff history, its starting QB, Trevor Lawrence, produced one of the most stunning in-game reversals ever witnessed. Lawrence threw four interceptions before the contest was 25 minutes old, but then countered with four touchdown passes to rally his team from a 27-0 deficit. "You couldn't write a crazier script," said Lawrence (28 of 47, 288 yards). "We said in the locker room that's kind of how our season's going. We're never out of the fight." The rally began just before halftime with a 9-yard TD pass to Evan Engram and was followed by scoring throws to Marvin Jones, Zay Jones, and Christian Kirk. After the Kirk touchdown, Lawrence pulled the Jaguars within 30-28 when he lunged across the goal line for a two-point conversion with 5:25 to play. Jacksonville's defense then did its part, forcing a punt to set up the winning drive – one highlighted by Travis Etienne's 25-yard run around the right edge on a fourth-and-1 play that positioned Riley Patterson for a 36-yard field goal as time expired.

Riley Patterson

John Raoux/AP Images

BILLS 34, Dolphins 31

Buffalo delivered in the key moments to advance to the divisional round for the third straight season. Early signs pointed toward a blowout as the Bills stormed to a 17-0 lead on Dawson Knox's 6-yard touchdown reception, James Cook's 12-yard scoring run, and a 33-yard Tyler Bass field goal. But the Dolphins didn't falter, turning second-quarter interceptions by Jevon Holland and Xavien Howard into points and moving in front, 24-20, when Zach Sieler brought back a fumble 5 yards for a touchdown early in the third quarter. Momentum, though, shifted back to the hosts when Kaiir Elam plucked an interception at the Dolphins 33, setting up a short Bills drive capped with Cole Beasley's 6-yard touchdown grab. Gabe Davis would add a 23-yard TD catch, and although Miami closed the gap, Buffalo's defense halted a final drive, part of an effort that saw linebacker Matt Milano post 10 tackles and two sacks. "One-week seasons, man, that's it," said Bills QB Josh Allen (23 of 39, 352 yards, 3 TDs). "All that matters is surviving and advancing. Doesn't matter how we win, it's if we win."

Josh Allen

Adrian Kraus/AP Images

BENGALS 24, Ravens 17

In danger of falling into a fourth-quarter deficit, Cincinnati instead scored an improbable – and record-breaking – touchdown that proved the difference in the first step toward defending its AFC title. The game was tied, 17-17, when Baltimore faced a third-and-goal from the 1-yard line. QB Tyler Huntley kept the ball off the snap and jumped in an attempt to reach over the goal line, but Bengals linebacker Germaine Pratt stopped him and fellow LB Logan Wilson knocked the ball loose. It landed in the arms of defensive end Sam Hubbard, who rumbled 98 yards for the go-ahead score – the longest fumble-return TD in NFL postseason history. "That's why you never give up on a play, even inside the 2," Bengals coach Zac Taylor said. Another big defensive play helped Cincinnati get on the board first when linebacker Akeem Davis-Gaither's interception led to Joe Burrow's 7-yard touchdown pass to Ja'Marr Chase. A 1-yard Burrow scoring run and Evan McPherson's 39-yard field goal accounted for the Bengals' other points. Baltimore drove to the Cincinnati 17 in the game's final minute but was stopped on downs.

Zac Taylor

Jeff Dean/AP Images

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PLAYOFF RECAPS

NFC WILD CARD

49ERS 41, Seahawks 23

As rookie playoff debuts go, it couldn't have gone any better. Brock Purdy, the last pick in the 2022 NFL Draft, accounted for four touchdowns – throwing for three and running for another – in leading San Francisco to victory, the team's 11th in a row. "Once the game started, it was just 11 on 11. I have to do my job, get it to the guys in space, and go from there," said Purdy, whose 332 passing yards were the second-most by a rookie in a playoff game in league history. "We didn't make it more than what it was. ... It wasn't, 'Oh my gosh, it's the playoffs and we got to get all tense.' We just have to play our game." Purdy's 3-yard TD pass to Christian McCaffrey gave the 49ers an early 10-0 lead, but Seattle carried a 17-16 advantage into the half and remained in front until Purdy's 1-yard scoring run midway through the third quarter. The Seahawks attempted to answer on their next possession, but a red-zone strip sack and fumble ended the threat, and it was all 49ers from there with Purdy throwing TD passes to Elijah Mitchell (7 yards) and Deebo Samuel (74 yards) to break things open.

Christian McCaffrey

Godofredo A. Vásquez/AP Images

Giants 31, VIKINGS 24

Taking a page from their opponent's playbook, the N.Y. Giants made the key plays in crunch time to edge a Minnesota team that was undefeated in 11 one-score games during the regular season. Giants QB Daniel Jones threw for 301 yards and two TDs and was equally effective with his legs (78 rushing yards), and Saquon Barkley rushed for a pair of scores. Barkley's 2-yard TD run with 7:47 to play snapped a 24-24 tie, and the Giants' defense twice stopped the Vikings in the closing minutes, the second time on downs when Xavier McKinney tackled T.J. Hockenson at midfield with 1:44 remaining. "I think we've had some of our better games recently and found some stuff that works for us," said Jones, who became the first NFL quarterback to amass 300 passing yards, two TD passes, and 70 rushing yards in a postseason game. "So we'll keep doing it. The coaching staff did a great job having us prepared." Barkley had a 28-yard run around the left side for the team's first TD, and Isaiah Hodgins and Daniel Bellinger caught scoring passes as the Giants built a 24-14 lead.

Daniel Jones

Chris Szagola/AP Images

Cowboys 31, BUCCANEERS 14

In the weekend's most complete performance, Dallas dominated host Tampa Bay for its first road playoff win in 30 years. Dak Prescott threw for 305 yards and four touchdowns, while the Cowboys' defense kept the Bucs off the scoreboard until the waning moments of the third quarter. "You watched this team that had all the reasons in the world to have criticism – you can call it doubt, you can call it whatever you want – and they came back and they're not the same team that came to town," Cowboys owner Jerry Jones said. "They're a better team having beaten Tampa and beaten a great player (Tom Brady) at quarterback." After Dallas took an early 6-0 lead on a 22-yard Prescott TD pass to Dalton Schultz, Brady drove the Bucs to the Cowboys 5-yard line before safety Jayron Kearse's interception ended the threat. It was the first time since 2019 that Brady had been intercepted in the red zone. Prescott then proceeded to lead a 15-play, 80-yard march that he capped with a 1-yard run on fourth-and-goal. Another TD pass to Schultz and a short scoring throw to Michael Gallup made it 24-0 before Tampa scored.

Dalton Schultz

Chris Carlson/AP Images

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AFC DIVISIONAL

CHIEFS.....27
Jaguars.....20

Pressed by Jacksonville throughout a fierce playoff battle at Arrowhead Stadium, Kansas City found enough answers to reach its fifth consecutive AFC Championship Game.

Nothing came easy for the Chiefs, who not only survived the AFC South champs but also an injury scare to All-Pro quarterback Patrick Mahomes. But whenever the momentum began teetering toward the visitors, K.C. seized it back. Travis Kelce had 14 catches for the victors to set an NFL single-game playoff record by a tight end, two that went for touchdowns. The first was an 8-yard grab from Mahomes on the Chiefs' opening drive; the other was a 1-yard strike from Chad Henne, who stepped in to direct a 98-yard march while Mahomes had his right ankle examined during the second quarter. "[Kelce is] special, man. He's a special player," Mahomes said. "One-of-a-kind player that's one of the main reasons we've been able to be in this position so many times." Mahomes (22 of 30, 195 yards, 2 TDs) was back on the field after intermission and led the Chiefs on two more scoring drives, including a decisive fourth-quarter touchdown after the Jaguars had narrowed the deficit to 20-17. The 7-yard scoring throw to Marquez Valdes-Scantling provided breathing room, and two big defensive plays down the stretch – a forced fumble by L'Jarius Sneed in the red zone that linebacker Nick Bolton recovered and a Jaylen Watson interception – kept Jacksonville at bay. With the victory, Chiefs coach Andy Reid pulled even with Tom Landry for second place in all-time postseason playoff wins (20).

Patrick Mahomes

Cooper Neill/AP Images

Bengals.....27
BILLS.....10

As a steady snow fell, Cincinnati rose to convincingly upend the AFC East champions and punch its ticket to a second straight conference title clash against the Chiefs.

The lake-effect snow had little impact on the Bengals, who led wire-to-wire while extending their franchise-record winning streak to 10 games. Cincinnati's offense was in rhythm right away behind Joe Burrow, who completed his first nine passes while directing two touchdown drives. His 28-yard scoring throw to Ja'Marr Chase made it 7-0, and he doubled that lead by finding Hayden Hurst wide open in the end zone for a 15-yard score. "The bigger the moment gets, the calmer he gets," Bengals coach Zac Taylor said of his third-year quarterback, who completed 23 of 36 passes for 242 yards. "Our guys believe. They walk on the field ready to attack." Trailing 17-7 to start the second half, the Bills marched deep into Bengals territory, but cornerback Mike Hilton busted up a running play for a 2-yard loss on second down and defensive back Dax Hill forced an overthrow on the next play, limiting the damage to a field goal. The Bengals gained separation on their next possession, effectively controlling the clock on a 12-play drive that Joe Mixon (game-high 105 rushing yards) punctuated with a 1-yard TD run. Evan McPherson added a pair of short field goals in the win, and Cam Taylor-Britt put an exclamation point on the day with his goal-line interception with just over a minute remaining. "I think we're a more complete team [than last year]. I think we're a better team," said Burrow. "We just seem to make plays when it counts."

Ja'Marr Chase

Seth Wenig/AP Images

The AFC Championship Game recap is on page 56.

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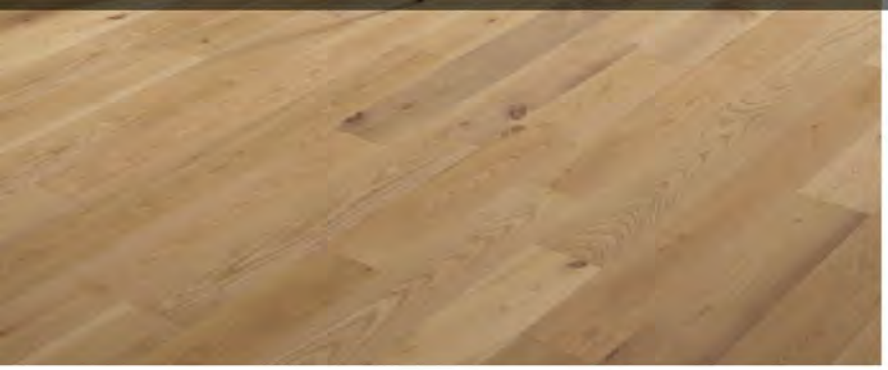

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NFC DIVISIONAL

EAGLES 38
Giants 7

Pumped up by an electric home crowd, a healthy and rested Philadelphia took flight with a dominating ground game in a victory over its division rival.

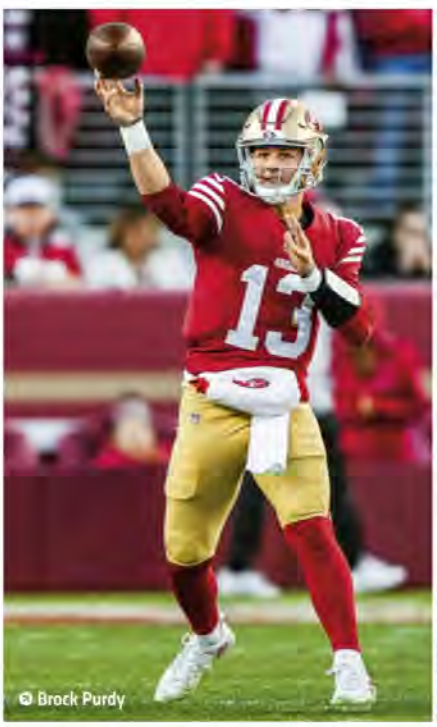
DeVonta Smith

Chris Szagola/AP Images

Taking full advantage of a bye as the NFC's top seed and with 21 of their 22 opening-day starters in the lineup, the Eagles came out sharp in this contest at Lincoln Financial Field. QB Jalen Hurts set the tone with touchdown passes on the team's first two drives – completing all seven of his throws for 89 yards on those marches – and later ran for a TD as the hosts built a 28-0 halftime lead. "This guy leads; he brings this calmness to the entire team," Eagles coach Nick Sirianni said. "He's as tough as they come. To me, there's not anybody who's played better football than him this year." While those scoring tosses to Dallas Goedert and DeVonta Smith handed the Eagles a 14-0 first-quarter lead, the night's big story was Philadelphia's rushing game, which racked up 268 yards, much of it by Kenneth Gainwell (112) and Miles Sanders (90). The Eagles' defense was dominant as well, forcing a turnover on downs on New York's opening possession and getting a James Bradberry interception at midfield to set up the team's third TD on a 3-yard Boston Scott run. Haason Reddick and Josh Sweat each had 1.5 of the team's five sacks. The win came five years to the day after the Eagles' last home playoff win, a 38-7 victory over the Vikings that sent them on to Super Bowl LII. "I'm so proud of this team, how we came out here. I'm so proud of these fans," Hurts said. "It's a Philly thing, you know? It's special."

49ERS 19
Cowboys 12

Closely following a game script that called for a defensive struggle, San Francisco pulled out the victory thanks to an acrobatic catch and some big stops.


Brock Purdy

Tony Avelar/AP Images

Touchdowns were scarce in this NFC Divisional Playoff clash, but the 49ers got the one they needed shortly after tight end George Kittle made the catch of the day. It paved the way for San Francisco's 12th consecutive win, a classic grind-it-out triumph over Dallas that secured a spot in the conference title game for the third time in four years. Kittle's juggling 30-yard grab of a Brock Purdy pass brought the ball across midfield and led to Christian McCaffrey's 2-yard TD run on the first play of the fourth quarter to break a 9-9 tie. "I'm not even in the read, so I just kind of saw a space and he hadn't thrown it yet, so I was just going up the field," said Kittle of the catch, one of five he had on the day. "[Brock] gave me a catchable ball and I was just trying to be dramatic. Just for TV." Robbie Gould kicked four field goals in the win, the last of those a 28-yarder with 3:08 to play, and the 49ers then stopped two final Cowboys drives to close out the game."Man, we're just excited that we won," said Purdy, who completed 19 of 24 passes for 214 yards. "Everyone did their part. It's playoff football, it's never easy, but we're moving on." With the win, Purdy joined Joe Flacco (2008) and Mark Sanchez (2009) as the only rookie QBs to win two playoff starts. Fred Warner and Deommodore Lenoir were part of a fierce 49ers' defense that surrendered only 282 total yards, grabbing interceptions that led to two Gould field goals and a 9-6 halftime edge.

The NFC Championship Game recap is on page 30.

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NEW YORK CITY & BOSTON OPENING 2023

Super Bowl XLI started with a play like no other when the Bears' Devin Hester (23) scored what remains the only opening-kickoff touchdown in Super Bowl history.

Jonathan Daniel/Getty Images

THE ONE AND ONLY? TIME

JUST WHEN YOU THINK YOU'VE SEEN EVERYTHING, ANOTHER UNIQUE ACHIEVEMENT IS ADDED TO SUPER BOWL LORE.

BY MIKE GARAFOLO

TOM BRADY TAPPED MIKE EVANS ON THE ARM, the two of them and the rest of their Buccaneers teammates smiling and laughing in the Green Bay cold while donning their NFC Champions hats.

Not even Brady, who's experienced more Super Bowls than any player in history, could believe it.

"Freakin' home Super Bowl!" he exclaimed following Tampa Bay's 31-26 win in the 2020 NFC title game.

For the first time in 55 years, a team would be playing in its own stadium for the Super Bowl. A fascinating storyline and a unique achievement.

For one year, anyway.

"We going to the Super Bowl!" Rams defensive tackle Aaron Donald exclaimed after knocking off the 49ers in last year's NFC Championship Game, well aware that the next stop was a familiar place: SoFi Stadium. "We home! We home!"

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That's how quickly Super Bowl history can be made – and matched. So before the 57th installment of the NFL's biggest game kicks off, let's take some time to recognize its most singularly special moments and events, the things that have only happened once in Super Bowl history.

And may never happen again.

Most Valuable Peculiarities

Chuck Howley was in the shower, trying to wash away the disappointment of the Cowboys blowing a fourth-quarter lead and losing Super Bowl V to the Colts, when his teammates started congratulating him.

"For what?" the linebacker replied.

For being named the game's Most Valuable Player after recording two interceptions and recovering a fumble. It's the only time the award has been given to a player on the losing team. It sounds odd now and it was even strange to Howley at the time, though he disputed reports he'd initially declined to accept the honor.

"I don't refuse an award like that. Not at all," Howley told *Vice* during a 2015 interview. "I was quite, I guess, dumbfounded that I had won. … I would much rather have won the game and played as well."

Seven years after Howley, another Cowboys linebacker was stunned to learn he'd made MVP history, too.

Randy White was simply enjoying the feeling of winning Super Bowl XII when defensive lineman Harvey Martin put his arm around him.

"Hey, we're the Most Valuable Players of this Super Bowl," Martin said in a moment that made the cover of *Sports Illustrated*.

For the first – and, yes, only – time, the game had co-MVPs.

"It didn't even register with me," White says. "I never even thought about it. I'm sure Harv didn't, either. We were focused on what we had to do, putting pressure on (Broncos quarterback) Craig Morton."

They certainly did that. White had a sack to knock Denver out of field goal range on the game's opening drive. On the Broncos' next possession, White hit Morton as he threw, resulting in an interception that set up a Dallas TD. Martin sacked Morton twice and forced a fumble, and by the time the game was done, Denver had turned the ball over eight times.

Though White still believes many on the "Doomsday Defense" were deserving of the award that day, he and Martin were the ones chosen to share the honor. Martin, however, was the only one who had his moment on *Good Morning America* the next day. White overslept.

"I missed my shot to be on TV," he says with a laugh.

No matter, as he and Martin shared many moments over the years.

"Harvey and I had a special bond," White says of his longtime friend, who passed away

Malcolm Emmons/USA Today Sports

Walter Iooss Jr./Getty Images

Cowboys linebacker Chuck Howley (54) had two interceptions in Super Bowl V against the Colts when he became the first, and still only, player from the losing team to be named the game's Most Valuable Player.
Seven years later, linebacker Randy White (54) and defensive lineman Harvey Martin (79) had the unique distinction of being named co-MVPs following Dallas' dominating Super Bowl XII win over the Broncos.

Let them keep their damn wings, OK?

TASTY, EASY VEGAN RECIPES AT PETA.ORG

PETA

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in 2001. "Every year around Super Bowl time, I think about Harvey.

"I think about Harvey a lot."

One Unhappy Return

There's a fine line between confidence and cockiness, and Tony Dungy found himself on the wrong side of it before Super Bowl XLI.

The Colts' coach had invited a chapel speaker to address the team that week. The speaker told the story of David and Goliath, and how David ran toward Goliath while everyone else had run away.

All week, the Colts had schemed to kick away from Bears rookie returner Devin Hester, who had brought back five kicks (three punts, two kickoffs) for touchdowns that season. But while mulling over the David and Goliath speech the night before the game, Dungy scrapped the plan.

"I hope we lose the toss, because if we do, we're going to kick it right down the middle to Hester and we're going to pound him," Dungy, in an interview with *The Dan Patrick Show* in 2015, recalled telling the players the morning of the game. "And when they know we've taken their best threat, they're going to be finished."

Everything went according to plan, until Hester juked the Colts' Marlin Jackson at the 20-yard line, easily avoided kicker Adam Vinatieri, and ran 92 yards to the end zone for the only touchdown on an opening kickoff in Super Bowl history.

Oops.

"(Fourteen) seconds later, he was in the end zone," Dungy said, recalling how quickly he'd come to regret his decision, "and everybody's looking at me like, 'Whose [idea was] that?'"

The Colts overcame Hester's return to win the game, just as the Ravens bounced back from Ron Dixon's 97-yard kickoff-return TD to beat the Giants in Super Bowl XXXV. That play brings us to another unique moment in Super Bowl history, when returns were part of three consecutive scoring plays.

It began with Baltimore's Duane Starks returning a Kerry Collins interception 49 yards for a touchdown to put the Ravens up, 17-0, late in the third quarter. After Dixon answered, Ravens coach Brian Billick was barking at special teams coordinator Russ Purnell.

But Purnell and his return team got the last laugh in the roller coaster of emotions when Jermaine Lewis went 84 yards up the right sideline in front of Billick for a touchdown.

"That was it," Billick said. "There's no way they come back from this."

He had that confidence because of a defense that, if not for Dixon, would have recorded the first shutout in Super Bowl history. Now that's something we haven't seen.

Yet.

Tunnel Vision

Timmy Smith was walking down the tunnel of Jack Murphy Stadium in San Diego right before Super Bowl XXII when he received a key piece of the game plan that had been withheld from him all week: He was going to be Washington's starting running back against the Broncos' "Orange Crush" defense.

The coaching staff had waited to tell Smith because they didn't want him to have too much time to get nervous for his first career start in, of all games, the Super Bowl.

It was the right call.

"My mind went blank on the plays and all that," Smith says.

The Ravens' Duane Starks (22) started a wild scoring spree in Super Bowl XXXV with his 49-yard interception-return touchdown against the Giants. The play was immediately followed by back-to-back kickoff-return TDs by the Giants' Ron Dixon and Baltimore's Jermaine Lewis. It took all of 36 seconds for the three touchdowns to be scored.

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Washington rookie running back Timmy Smith (36) didn't know he was starting until minutes before Super Bowl XXII, then went out and recorded the lone 200-yard rushing game in Super Bowl history, piling up 204 yards – highlighted by a 58-yard touchdown run – in his team's 42-10 win over Denver.
When the Ravens and 49ers clashed in Super Bowl XLVII, it pitted coaches – and brothers – John (left) and Jim Harbaugh against each other. John's Ravens prevailed, 34-31, over Jim's 49ers.

A pep talk from quarterback Doug Williams calmed Smith down. The playbook came back to him, not that he needed to remember much of it. Washington's plan was to run their signature counter play as much as they could behind a collection of future Hall of Fame offensive linemen affectionately dubbed "The Hogs."

"[Our offensive line] just took control of the game," Smith says. "The only thing I had to do was hold on to the ball and run."

Smith ran a lot that day. For 204 yards, to be exact. It's a Super Bowl record and the only 200-yard rushing performance in the game's history. Smith realized what he'd accomplished when the video board announced his record to the crowd. He knew he'd broken his idol Marcus Allen's mark of 191 yards in Super Bowl XVIII.

"It felt like my high school days, where you could run as you wish, all over the place," Smith says. "It was almost like the defense wasn't there."

A Perfect Ending

The list of one-time Super Bowl events can go on for quite some time, depending on where you draw the line:

- A catch on top of a helmet (the Giants' David Tyree, XLII)
- A quarterback catching a touchdown (Nick Foles on the Eagles' Philly Special, LII)
- A wide receiver throwing a touchdown (the Steelers' Antwaan Randle El, XL)
- A player with three interceptions in a game (the Raiders' Rod Martin, XV)
- Four straight appearances by a team (Bills, XXV-XXVIII)
- Brothers coaching against one another (John and Jim Harbaugh, XLVII)
- A stadium blackout (same game)
- Two networks broadcasting the game (I)
- A halftime performer jumping off the roof and into a stadium (Lady Gaga, LI)

But before this story goes into overtime (oh, right, that's only happened once, shortly after Gaga's leap when the Patriots stormed back from a 25-point deficit to defeat the Falcons in Super Bowl LI), let's close things out with the greatest group achievement we may never see again: the completion of a perfect season.

The 1972 Dolphins stand alone in that regard with a 14-7 victory over Washington in Super Bowl VII – their 17th win in 17 games. It was a flawless run that began in training camp with coach Don Shula showing the film of Super Bowl VI, which Miami had lost badly to the Cowboys. Though that game occurred six months earlier, Shula broke it down as if it had been the day before.

"He raked us over the coals for an hour and 55 minutes," running back Mercury Morris recalls. "Then he walked to the front of the room and said, 'You see how sick and sorry you feel now? Think of how sick and sorry you'll be if you don't go back and redeem yourselves.'"

Morris said Shula then took some of the blame, saying he'd forgotten to tell the players they need to win all three segments of their season: the regular season, the playoffs, and the Super Bowl.

"We dedicated ourselves to produce a product in practice we would put on the field every Sunday to control the game," Morris says. "That allowed us to beat opponents week after week after week."

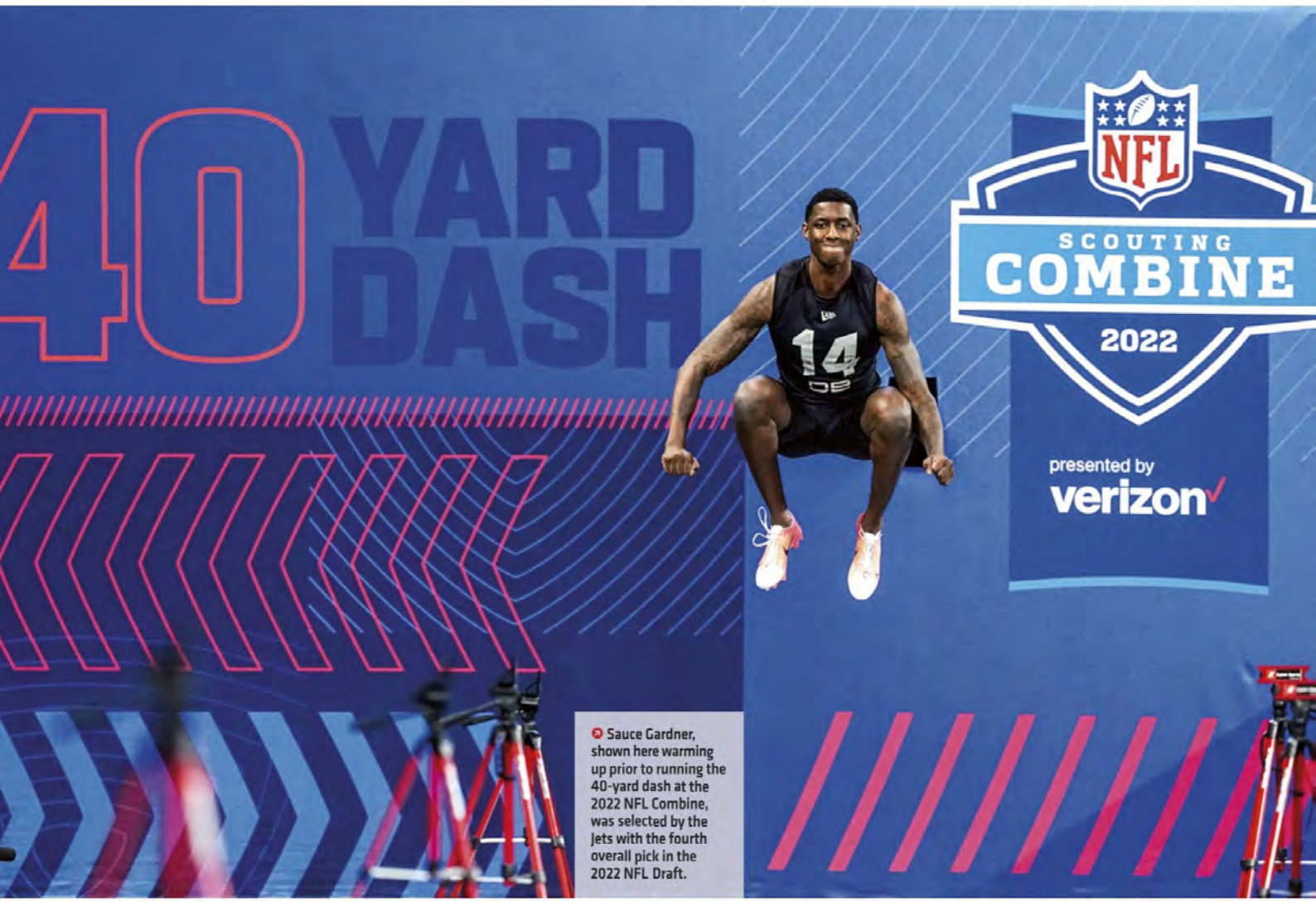
Though the Dolphins continued to stand alone when the Patriots' run at perfection was stopped by the Giants in Super Bowl XLII, Morris wasn't rooting against New England – because the '72 Dolphins will always be the first to go unbeaten.

"What's the second-largest canyon in the country?" Morris sometimes asks people, letting their silence make his point for them. "There is no besting the Grand Canyon."

Mike Garafolo *is a reporter and host for NFL Network who has covered the NFL for various outlets since 2000. He lives in New Jersey with his wife, Jessica, and daughters Carmen and Vivian.*

Fans are now a staple at NFL offseason events, from Jaguars devotees (left) attending the 2022 NFL Draft in Las Vegas to Seahawks fans (right) getting autographs from Geno Smith during Back Together Saturday, a day-long celebration to open training camp.

ALWAYS IN SEASON



Sauce Gardner, shown here warming up prior to running the 40-yard dash at the 2022 NFL Combine, was selected by the Jets with the fourth overall pick in the 2022 NFL Draft.

Joe C. Hong/AP Images

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Chris Olave (left) poses with fans after being taken by the Saints in the 2022 draft. No. 1 overall pick Travon Walker (right) runs a drill at the 2022 NFL Combine.

BY TRANSFORMING THE OFFSEASON CALENDAR INTO A SERIES OF MUST-SEE EVENTS, THE NFL HAS FOUND NEW WAYS TO ENGAGE FANS UNTIL THE GAMES BEGIN AGAIN. BY JUDY BATTISTA

Back in 2012, when the NFL first cracked open the door of the Scouting Combine to fans, it asked them to submit essays explaining why they wanted to be among the lucky 250 people allowed inside Lucas Oil Stadium to watch an endless loop of three-cone drills and 40-yard dashes.

About 6,000 people responded, including an Indianapolis Colts fan who hoped to spot the heir to Peyton Manning in that year's class. One person, though, seemed to have seen the future of the NFL offseason and gotten a head start.

"Every year," his note read, "we have a Combine party."

Combine parties might not have yet reached the widespread chips-scarfing and beer-guzzling cache of a Super Bowl bash, but if the Super Bowl is Christmas Day for football fans, the Scouting Combine is a fan's New Year's Eve – full of anticipation and hope for the fresh start of the year to come.

As the 2022 season concludes with Super Bowl LVII, the launch of the 2023 season is just days away. That is no accident. The Combine is the first event in the NFL's offseason, or, more accurately, the non-playing season, kicking off a monthly parade of must-see happenings that the NFL has carefully built to sustain fans' interest.

None of the events are new. The common draft began in 1967, after all, and the only real downtime the NFL has ever had is the few weeks before and after the Fourth of July. What is new is the attention paid to and the openness to fans the NFL now embraces for its biggest offseason moments.

"That window from post-Super Bowl all the way through the Hall of Fame (Enshrinement in early August) – it's ultimately one journey that gets you back to playing football again," says Peter O'Reilly, the NFL's executive vice president for club business and league events. "You're generally appealing in the offseason to the more avid fans, which is a sizable number of people. The avid fans are no less avid in March or June than they are in the heart of season, so that insatiable appetite – how do we make sure we are serving that?"

Here's how.

FEBRUARY / Just a few weeks after the Super Bowl, the path to the draft begins with a football convention of coaches, scouts, players, agents, general managers, and media gathered with a goal of evaluating the incoming class of draftable players.

A former sportswriter used to tell the story of being in Indianapolis for the 1998 Scouting Combine. One day, someone walked through the hotel lobby where the few reporters attending the Combine were hanging out.

"Anyone want to talk to Peyton Manning?" the reporters were asked.

Today, Manning's availability would be shown live as part of all-day coverage. NFL Network started a Combine show in 2005, but it was on tape, an indication that nobody was quite sure who would watch. Yet interest has only grown as fans have become more educated about the draft.

Combine coverage now consumes multiple days in late February, and thousands of fans are in attendance. The key to its popularity isn't complicated: NFL fans want the first glimpse of players who might transform their teams.

"The Combine is gym practice," says Charlie Yook, NFL Media's executive producer. "But I think the way the league has elevated that event is to make it matter. Why do we care about 10-yard splits? What does this drill mean?"

MARCH / NFL players won the right to free agency in its current form in 1993. Fans won Free Agency Frenzy in 2012, when NFL Network started days-long coverage of the fast-paced first wave of veteran player movement. The late Reggie White was the first headliner free agent,

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Veteran linebacker Von Miller was part of an impressive 2022 free-agent class, joining the Buffalo Bills after starring for the Rams' Super Bowl LVI championship team.

John Locher/Getty Images

Bryant Young (above) delivers his acceptance speech at the 2022 Hall of Fame Enshrinement Ceremony in Canton, Ohio. The early-August event signals the final chapter in the NFL's offseason. Florida State defensive end Jermaine Johnson (left) joined NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell on stage after being selected by the Jets at the 2022 NFL Draft.

but it will be hard to top the sustained whirl of the 2022 free agency period, when stars Terron Armstead, Von Miller, and J.C. Jackson signed with new teams, and Russell Wilson, Carson Wentz, Matt Ryan, Tyreek Hill, Khalil Mack, and Davante Adams changed teams in an unprecedented flurry of offseason trades.

"Free agency frenzy – that's a phenomenon in and of itself," O'Reilly says.

APRIL / About the draft?

"It's the crown jewel offseason event," Yook explains. "It's not close. It's an established entity since 1967. We just made it bigger."

Much, much bigger. For the people responsible for team-building, the draft has always been the most important part of the offseason schedule, all the way back to when it was held in a New York hotel conference room, with picks written on chalk boards. The earliest drafts were held in the middle of the workday, since nobody was watching anyway.

In 1980, NFL Commissioner Pete Rozelle agreed to allow a new sports network, ESPN, to broadcast the draft live, although he was skeptical it would have much of an audience. Even as interest grew, the draft was conducted over two long days spanning a weekend. But in 2010, Commissioner Roger Goodell announced the draft would be spread out over three days and shown in prime time.

"We continue to look for ways to make the draft more accessible to more fans," Goodell said then. "Moving the first round to prime time on Thursday night will make it available to fans on what is typically the most-watched night of television."

He was right. More than four million people watched in 2010 on ESPN and NFL Network. Five years later, the NFL took the show on the road, attracting hundreds of thousands of fans to locations across the county. O'Reilly calls it "widening the lens of the draft" by attracting casual fans.

"That was a tipping point," Yook says. "Now we're awarding draft sites like Super Bowl sites. That rewards local cities, that becomes another traveling thing. Why wouldn't you want to go to Kansas City? It's like another festival. We have a free music act at the end of every night."

MAY / Until a few years ago, this was the real start of the quietest part of the year.

"In older iterations, the draft would probably have been the signal of, 'We're done, see you next season,'" Yook says.

That's because until 2020, the schedule was released before the draft in mid-April, and prior to 2004, the release was accompanied by almost no fanfare. Then, in 2004, NFL Network started a schedule show, offering analysis of the matchups. And in 2020, the schedule was released in May, in large part because of uncertainty about the season caused by the pandemic.

But the NFL had long sought a way to get the schedule release out of the shadow of the draft. Moving it later also allowed the schedule makers to react to where premier college players landed. The schedule is now so highly anticipated that in 2022 the NFL released bits and pieces for a full week, fueling days of analysis and fan travel bookings. And it is the high point of the year for teams' social media departments, who unveil the schedule with increasing creativity – last year, the Chargers presented their schedule in the form of an anime movie.

Even NFL executives marvel at the interest because opponents and locations are known for months before the slate is released. But more than a few fans have waited for the schedule to come out before picking their wedding date.

"It's how people frame their falls," O'Reilly says.

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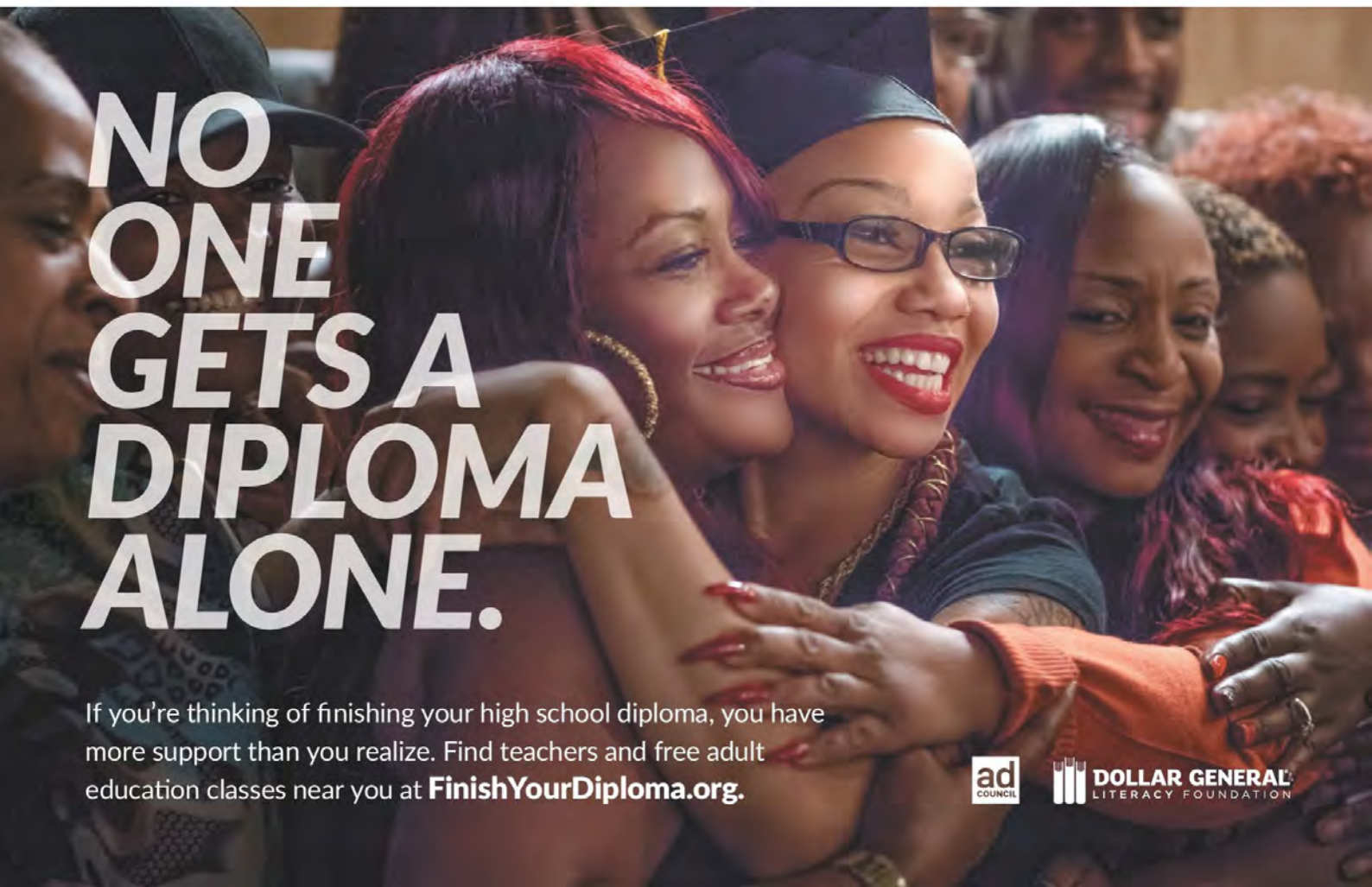
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2023 CALENDAR

NFL SCOUTING COMBINE
February 28 - March 6 • Indianapolis
Lucas Oil Stadium will welcome more than 300 pro prospects for testing, drills, and workouts in advance of the NFL Draft, and NFL Network will again provide extensive live coverage each day. Learn more at **NFL.com/combine.**

NFL DRAFT
April 27-29 • Kansas City
The plaza outside of Union Station hosts the 88th annual NFL Draft, which begins in prime time on April 27. NFL Network and ESPN will provide full live coverage of the three-day event, while ABC will televise the first round. More info at **NFL.com/draft.**

TRAINING CAMP
Mid-July
With the start of training camp, highlighted by the day-long Back Together Saturday event, NFL teams officially begin their pursuit of a Super Bowl title. NFL.com will provide analysis and insights, and NFL Network will televise every preseason game. Get updates at **NFL.com/trainingcamp.**

PFHOF ENSHRINEMENT WEEK
August 3-6 • Canton
Honor the Greatest of the Game at the 2023 Pro Football Hall of Fame Enshrinement Week Powered by Johnson Controls. Visit **ProFootballHOF.com/tickets** for information on tickets and VIP packages.

NFL KICKOFF
September 7
The 2023 NFL season gets underway Thursday, Sept. 7, with a celebration at the home of the Super Bowl LVII champion. This year's event in Los Angeles was highlighted by a performance from J Blavin prior to the Rams-Bills contest. Additional details available at **NFL.com/kickoff.**

INTERNATIONAL SERIES
Dates TBA
For the 16th time in 17 years, the NFL will hold regular-season games outside of the United States. The Bills, Jaguars, and Titans will host contests in London, while the Chiefs and Patriots are slated to play in Germany. Opponents/dates will be announced when the 2023 schedule is released on **NFL.com.**

SUPER BOWL LVIII
February 11, 2024 • Las Vegas
Allegiant Stadium, home of the Las Vegas Raiders, joins the list of Super Bowl sites when it hosts Super Bowl LVIII to cap the 2023 NFL season. The game will be televised by CBS. Learn more about the game and the events leading up to it at **NFL.com/superbowl** and **lvsuperbowlhc.com.**

London's Tottenham Hotspur Stadium hosted two NFL games during the 2022 regular season. The league is planning three games in the UK and two in Germany as part of its 2023 International Series.

JUNE / For football fans, June really does represent summer break. It's the only month of the year without what is known in the NFL as a "tentpole event" to quench the public thirst for football. But maybe not for long.

Yook said there have been discussions about how to push the football calendar into June, and there's an easy answer: give fans more access to the organized team activities and mini-camps that take place in the early part of the month. It would be a first chance for them to see how the rookies and free-agent acquisitions fit in with the team.

JULY / For years, the NFL searched for a way to mark the end of the long wait for football with an appropriately celebratory event. The comparison often used by the league was something like college basketball's "midnight madness," when teams are allowed to begin their first practices, crossed with March Madness – with one day of training camp practices going from nearly dawn until dusk with all teams across the country.

The new collective bargaining agreement set a uniform reporting date for training camps, opening the door for Back Together Saturday, which was launched in 2021. Every team practices.

"A lot of us were anxious to create it for a while – a day when all feels right and we're back together for football," O'Reilly says. "A Saturday in that first week of camp from morning to night … and make it accessible to fans."

The goal of NFL Network's coverage, Yook says, is unique: It wants to spend an equal amount of time with all 32 teams that day. And to remind everyone that, finally, the games will be starting again soon.

Judy Battista *is an award-winning journalist who has covered the NFL since 2000. She is the senior national columnist and an on-air analyst for NFL.com and NFL Network.*

BY DARREN WOODSON

FAMILY ... FRIENDS ... PHOENIX

WINNING SUPER BOWL XXX IN ARIZONA STANDS ALONE AMONG MY FOOTBALL MEMORIES.

Damian Strohmeyer/Getty Images

Phoenix native Darren Woodson was the Cowboys' starting strong safety in their Super Bowl XXX win over the Steelers. The game was played at Sun Devil Stadium, where Woodson had starred while attending Arizona State.

My mother, Freddie Luke, was a single mom who raised four kids in west Phoenix, and she had to find ways to keep us off the streets. Whether it be the drug and alcohol game, the gangs, I remember stepping over needles on my walk to school. The only way my mom could keep us safe was through sports. She worked two jobs – leaving the house at 5:30 a.m. and getting back late at night – so she registered us for every sport, and if the ball rolled, we played it.

Football came to me through my older brothers Randy and Todd. My sister, Monica, played basketball, but I could not wait to get on the football field. I'd stand on the sideline with my little helmet at 4 years old while my brothers played Pee Wee games.

It might sound funny, but football came easy to me. It was something that I always felt I was going to do. In Phoenix, it gets to be 115 degrees, but that didn't matter. The heat didn't bother me. I put that helmet on, and I was playing tackle football at age 7.

I knew back then my identity was wrapped around football. The people in the neighborhood knew me as a good football player, and I felt good about what I was doing on the field.

When I got to Arizona State, that's where the story changed. I was so entangled in the web of being a football player that my grades really slipped. Even though I had to sit out my first year, Don Bocchi, who was the recruiting coordinator at ASU, stayed on me to get my grades up. Don was my first real father figure, and he said, "You're going to get this done. We're going to change your work ethic."

I always knew that I was smart enough to get the work done. I just put it on the back burner. Sitting out my freshman year was the first time I dealt with humility, the first time I couldn't control things. I couldn't be around the football program, the facility, my teammates. I couldn't even go to the games.

My focus was on school because that was the only way I could get back on the field. My most fulfilling moment to that point was when I got my grades up and joined the team. I achieved what I needed to scholastically, and I never looked back. I knew how important education was, and I graduated in three-and-a-half years (with a degree in criminal justice) because of that. It was there, at Arizona State, that I went from a boy to a man.

The ASU football program also brought Lovie Smith into my life. Lovie was our linebackers coach while I was there, and he's the one who convinced me that I'd play at the next level. As a matter of fact, as a sophomore, he told me I'd be in the NFL and that I'd be a Hall of Famer.

I was drafted by the Cowboys in 1992, and we won two Super Bowls (XXVII and XXVIII) right out of the gate. Yet even though I had five tackles in that first Super Bowl victory and recovered a fumble in the second, the most memorable win of all came in Super Bowl XXX when we beat the Steelers at Sun Devil Stadium, on my collegiate home field.

Just being back in Arizona for the game was surreal. I went to visit the school, the teachers, the coaches, and the friends who raised me and who always supported me. These are the people I needed to see when I got off the plane. They're the same people who got tickets to the game.

It was one thing to play and win the game, but to have the people that love and support me at the game was special. They experienced the same joy that I experienced, but none was greater than to have my son, DJ, and my family there, in my college stadium, in my hometown.

A three-time Super Bowl champion and four-time First Team All-Pro, Phoenix native **Darren Woodson** *played his entire 13-year career (1992-2004) with the Dallas Cowboys.*

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SUPER BOWL LVII

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